Doctoral Thesis

Resource Mobilization among Informal Entrepreneurs

A Case of Event Planning Industry of Pakistan

Khizran Zehra
Be truthful, no matter what. Your Lord and your mother’s prayers are always with you… Shamim

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to an angel from God, my mother “Shamim Javed” - you inspire, you protect, you support, and you understand.

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my father “Javed Ashraf”- you left us so soon but your integrity and hardwork will always guide me.
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Abstract

As the academic study of entrepreneurship continues to grow, increasing attention has been paid to resource constraints and their effects on the long-term viability and operation of ventures. While some firms in sectors such as technology are better-able to obtain venture capital financing, such resources are not widely available to new firms. Most entrepreneurs face substantial resource constraints (Shepherd, Douglas, & Shanley, 2000) and this may be even more prevalent for entrepreneurs operating in resource-deprived environments such as informal entrepreneurs operating unregistered business activities. While there are informal entrepreneurs all over the world, academic insights have predominantly focused on developed nations. The question of how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources to run their ventures in resource-constraints situations thus require attention.

This thesis focuses on informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry in the developing country of Pakistan. The study seeks to understand resource mobilization from a social and human capital perspective. Social and human capital theories have been developed in western entrepreneurship contexts, and the application of social capital and human capital to the study of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in a developing nation is the major general contribution of this thesis.

Since the establishment of the sovereign state of Pakistan, the event planning industry has developed in different stages and phases. It has suffered from different policies by political leaders but survived through challenging business situations. Today it is considered a dynamic creative industry, with one large event industry group existing in Islamabad in the province of Punjab. The driving force behind this major transition and the dynamism of the events industry has been shaped by informal entrepreneurs, in this case event planners. Event planning forms a major industry in Pakistan in terms of local job creation, market development and value creation, and also involves other creative industries such as craft-based industries, textiles, fashion, software, printing, and music. However, relatively little attention has been given to this type of entrepreneurship in research. This study considers it important to explore such entrepreneurship from a developing economy perspective, and its implications both in terms of policy and practice.

In order to understand informal entrepreneurship in the event planning industry, resource mobilization activities, and a social and human capital perspective have been selected. The social and human capital perspective is suitable for understanding informal entrepreneurship. Resource mobilization from a social capital perspective holds promise for informal entrepreneurship. In emerging economy industries, the competitive advantage one entrepreneur gains over another is not a result of education but of the social networks that these
entrepreneurs develop. Indeed, these networks provide entrepreneurs with necessary resources.

The social capital literature discusses both the benefits and limitations of social capital, meaning that not all social capital is beneficial. Social capital brings together consideration of family/friends, weak ties, powerful contacts and beneficial networks. These attributes are referred to as bonding, bridging and linking social capital, respectively. These different types of social capital refer to different types of collaborations and the patterns of the network surrounding the entrepreneurs that provide context for exchange. While these concepts are explained separately in order to facilitate a clear understanding, they are closely interrelated (and especially bridging and linking social capital). The advantages that entrepreneurs reap from these different types of social collaborations and networks are categorized as social capital.

Social capital plays an important role in the entrepreneurial process and venture development. However, social capital alone may not ensure success. Entrepreneurs rely on their human capital to create an environment in which firms can access networks and social capital. Entrepreneurs develop different networks due to their diverse knowledge and backgrounds. In return, the use of human capital relies on the existence of social structures and social networks, i.e., networks provide or limit the resources required by entrepreneurs. Human capital can be seen as containing both generic and specific elements. Generic elements of human capital include education, age, gender, and technical know-how for general economic activity, whereas specific human capital is the ability to seek and filter information into the search for potential resources.

The resource mobilization activities and strategies that entrepreneurs develop constitute their social capital; the stock of knowledge and experience as their human capital. The central guiding research question underlying this study is to understand the impact of social and human capital influencing resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. The data were collected in phases with the aim of understanding entrepreneurial activity using a comparative case-based approach. The primary concern was to comprehend what constitutes resources within the context of event planning. Empirical evidence provides a qualitative study of 15 informal event planning ventures.

The mix of social and human capital (having collaborative networks and shared collaborative knowledge, along with a strong trend for informal venturing), play important role in effective resource mobilization of informal entrepreneurs in this thesis. This combination of social and human capital activities of informal entrepreneurs improves the synergistic effects contributing to the readiness of informal entrepreneurs. Readiness is an evolving concept that emerges during the resource mobilization process of informal entrepreneurs and allows them a place in the market even with limited resources. In addition, new insights arise from the findings, namely that resource mobilization is not competitive but rather collaborative. This collaborative resource mobilization is largely based on activities such as competitor's collaborations and collaborative
knowledge sharing through informal venturing. Informal venturing is a form of venture human capital that can help evaluate certain information and make judgments. Entrepreneurial thinking is nurtured with new information and greater knowledge. Communication skills played an important role in gathering resources. Those entrepreneurs who can effectively communicate with manpower, especially waged labor, can engage labor skillfully. For women, following a particular dress code and behaving in a certain way in public is also accepted, especially in the less developed areas of cities. Those who follow these unsaid social norms and expectations were in a better position to create trusting and long-term social relations. Trust and the reciprocal exchange of resources accumulates social capital among competitors and is most important in this collaborative resource mobilization process and works as a major strengthening factor in promoting collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs.

The events industry is becoming an enormous proximate group in Islamabad city (sector E11), and this network is providing new event planning entrepreneurs with considerable information, high-quality event design, new skills, and competition. Besides event planning ventures, many different related industries (e.g., flower shops, fabrics, local crafts, furniture, food, fashion, and music) are flourishing in the area. Bridging and linking the social capital with sparse networks can additionally provide new opportunities in the form of new information and new markets.
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1 Introduction

1.1 An Overview

Resource-constrained environments have been widely researched (Welter, Xheneti, & Smallbone, 2017), as modern organizations face a variety of constraints that threaten their ability to survive. Existing literature highlights how most small business owners and managers work in resource-constrained environments (Armstrong, 2015). Limitations of time, money, human and natural resources, along with fierce competition and heavy customer and regulatory demands, all constrain the ways in which new products and technologies are designed and developed (Rosso, 2011). Yet, organizations need to grow in the presence of several constraints in today’s dynamic environment (Baker & Nelson, 2005). As the academic study of entrepreneurship continues to grow, increasing attention is paid to resource constraints and their effects on the long-term viability and operation of ventures (Corbett & Katz, 2013).

Therefore, entrepreneurship ultimately concerns the arrangement of resources into productive activities (Foss, Foss, & Klein, 2007). While some firms in sectors such as technology are better-able to obtain venture capital financing, such resources are not widely available to new firms (Desa, 2012; Desa & Basu, 2013), especially those firms that operate in a low-technology domain or are informal (Bhagavatula, 2009; Bhagavatula, Elfring, Dana, 2013a,b; Van Tilburg, & Van De Bunt, 2010). Even firms that experience growth tends to find it difficult to attract required resources in many contexts. Most entrepreneurs face substantial resource constraints (Shepherd, Douglas, & Shanley, 2000), and this may be even more pertinent for entrepreneurs operating in resource-deprived environments (Korsgaard, Müller, & Tanvig, 2015), such as informal entrepreneurs with unregistered business activities.

Nevertheless, many businesses accept these challenges and manage to cope with constrained scenarios quite resourcefully (Baker, 2007; Baker & Nelson, 2005; Baker, Pollock & Sapienza, 2013; Powell & Baker, 2014). Economists and sociologists agree that when faced with environmental demands, many people will act (Ganz, 2004; Stinchfield, Nelson, & Wood, 2013). Sometimes during the crisis and resource constraints, firms may devise unique opportunities and continue to grow and develop (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Smallbone & Welter, 2012). From this perspective, the enterprising entrepreneur creates novel combinations and can identify potential resources, converting them into a resource that can be used. This understanding and analysis of entrepreneurial activity in the presence of different constraints sees resources as the key to realizing entrepreneurial opportunities (Baker & Nelson, 2005).
Therefore, entrepreneurship scholarship frequently mentions the importance of resource mobilization as a means of negotiating the constraints and hurdles that might arise during a firm’s founding and development (Corbett & Katz, 2013; Misra & Kumar, 2000; Powell & Baker, 2014). Resource mobilization is important in the venturing process as entrepreneurs often do not have the required resources to explore the opportunities they identify (Desa, 2012; Desa & Basu, 2013).

The arrangement of different unique resources, whether tangible or intangible, as a means of minimizing various constraints in different contexts forms the primary aspect of entrepreneurial resource mobilization (Welter & Xheneti, 2013). Previous literature highlights certain activities that are important for resource mobilization for entrepreneurial ventures. These activities are discussed here to depict the resource mobilization phenomenon. The activities presented in the relevant literature comprise resource identification, resource gathering and resource utilization. Identification and knowledge of resources facilitates the search for information about the industry, market, clients, networks, trends, suppliers, competition, culture, heritage, and so forth (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Stathopoulou, Psaltopoulos, & Skuras, 2004). Entrepreneurs draw on networks and social contacts to mobilize resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Finally, entrepreneurs use their knowledge and social capital to utilize resources (Feldman, 2004). Entrepreneurial resource mobilization is primarily a function of resource identification, the gathering of resources and the utilization of resources.

Entrepreneurs perceive the identification of resources as possessing a clear understanding of which resources are required (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Identification of required resources is important as it can lead to the success or failure of ventures depending upon the accuracy and appropriateness of the evaluation of resource need. Brush, Greene and Hart (2001) argue that the ways in which resources are identified and developed in earlier stages of ventures represent an extraordinary challenge for entrepreneurs. Furthermore, these authors argue that each resource choice has significant implications on a venture’s survival and development, and many ventures fail each year as they cannot find appropriate resources (Brush et al., 2001). Prior findings within the broader entrepreneurship research suggest that entrepreneurial human capital (i.e., prior knowledge) influences the ways in which firms judge opportunities and identify networks and resources (Cai, Hughes, & Yin, 2014) and make intelligent decisions to shape opportunities accordingly (Sonenshein, 2014). Baker and Nelson (2005, p. 359) suggest that an entrepreneur’s resource identification is as important as identifying opportunities and the human capital of an entrepreneur, i.e., knowledge of resources is crucial in embracing new opportunities and problems (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). Entrepreneurial knowledge is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs enter strategic networking (Cai et al., 2014), access resources (Baker, Miner and Eesley, 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (Salunke, Weerawardena, & McColl-Kennedy,
Entrepreneurs draw on various strategies to identify resources and deal with resource constraints. When entrepreneurs perceive themselves as deficient in a resource, they lower their demand and abandon existing plans for growth (Dolmans, Burg, Reymen & Romme, 2014). However, when entrepreneurs have abundant resources, they seek business growth and development plans (Dolmans et al, 2014). Resource need identification leads to decisions of internal coping or external coping strategies for resource mobilization (Dolmans et al., 2014). Internal coping implies a selection among the effects that can be established with a given set of resources (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy, Dew, Read, & Wiltbank, 2008; Baker & Nelson, 2005), whereas external resource acquisition generally relies on outside parties for the resources required (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Current entrepreneurship scholarship on resource constraints and resource mobilization includes different explanations of how entrepreneurs create something from nothing. Most research has focused on the different ways of gathering resources, i.e., the ways in which individuals seek resources in response to the scarcity of their resource environments. Existing research indicates that new ventures can purchase a variety of resources through financial resources (Brush et al., 2001). Internal developments, i.e., using entrepreneurial knowledge for creative problem-solving, such as combining existing resources with new ones in novel ways (Sirmon & Hitt, 2003) or utilizing the resources at hand (Gedajlovic, Honig, Moore, Payne, & Wright, 2013) allows for success with limited resources (Baker et al., 2003; Baker and Nelson, 2005). The final major route for pooling resources in the new venture is via networks (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003) and social resourcing (Sarasvathy, et al, 2008) to access instrumental resources such as social capital to obtain scarce resources (Gedajlovic et al., 2013). Gathered resources are put into recombination and are used to pursue opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The acquisition of skills, material, and labor facilitated via financial, social and human capital are crucial to creating competitive products and services (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Penrose, 1995).

Social capital, which is the aggregate of actual and potential resources from durable networks (Bourdieu, 1986), is extremely important in addressing various resource constraints. Social capital tied with networks of entrepreneurs can influence resource mobilization for venture development. Entrepreneurs benefit from social capital in order to mitigate or eliminate resource scarcity. Researchers have long argued that social relations and the structure of an entrepreneur’s social networks may facilitate the mobilization of a valuable resource (Aldrich, Zimmer, & Jones, 1986; Birley, 1985; Gedajlovic et al., 2013; Hoang & Antoncic, 2003). Prior literature shows the importance of social capital for business success in developing economy contexts, especially for informal entrepreneurs (Bhagavatula, 2009; Bhagavatula et al., 2010; Mair and Marti, 2007, 2009).

Social network relationships provide required resources to entrepreneurs on attractive terms, especially at the start of their ventures (Semrau & Werner, 2014),
such as to draw resources from an entrepreneur’s network at lower costs, or to seek advice from closed networks (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003). Two core ideas are prominent in social capital theory. At one core is Granovetter’s (1985) argument regarding the strength of weak ties: weak ties help entrepreneurs search for opportunities and critical assets. The second stream concerns strong ties (Coleman, 1988) based on the social capital approach: strong ties improve the likelihood of mobilizing resources (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003, 2007).

Nevertheless, on its own, searching for a resource provides no guarantee that entrepreneurs will be successful in their venture’s developments. This is because the utilization of resources through repurposing and redefining is also crucial for the successful establishment of ventures (Feldman, Worline, Cameron, & Spreitzer, 2011; Feldman, 2004).

To summarize, resource mobilization can be categorized as activities comprising identifying, gathering, and utilizing resources. Resource mobilization affects possibilities to engage in entrepreneurial activities through social capital mobilization (networks, trust, norms, exchange) and human capital mobilization (information of entrepreneurs) as central tenets of entrepreneurial resource mobilization activities. Entrepreneurial resource mobilization through human capital implies an information search for social networks and resources that may pose a useful dimension for understanding why some entrepreneurs are better able to react to constrained situations than others (Fiet, Norton Jr, & Clouse, 2013). Entrepreneurial resource mobilization and the arrangement of the resource through building social contacts means collaborations, alliances, networking or community involvement (Berglund & Johansson, 2007; Hjorth, Johannisson, & Steyaert, 2003; Sarasvathy, 2001; Starr & MacMillan, 1990; Wiltbank, Dew, Read, & Sarasvathy, 2006).

1.2 Resource Mobilization in the Context of Informal Entrepreneurship

The research context in this study is non-western and based on informal entrepreneurship in the event planning industry of Pakistan. Informal entrepreneurship is defined as a business activity that is used to describe unregistered business activity (Dana, 2013a, 2013b, 2014; Webb, Bruton, Tihanyi & Ireland, 2013; Webb, Ireland, & Ketchen, 2014; Webb, Tihanyi, Ireland & Sirmon, 2009). Economic anthropology is a field of study that has primarily focused on non-market exchanges in non-industrial societies (Beckert, 2007). Karl Polanyi (1886-1964), studied market behaviors in traditional societies where such markets and social actions were embedded in kinship and the social and cultural environment (Beckert, 2007). The interest in understanding informal economic transactions increased around the 1950s to 1970s (Stewart, 1991), including studies of traditional production in the markets of Africa (Dalton, 1962), exchange spheres
in Darfur (Barth, 1967), trade and entrepreneurial culture in Indonesian towns influenced by religious beliefs (Geertz, 1963), and the customary system of rewards in rural south India (Epstein, 1967). This literature was subsequently refocused on market exchanges at the periphery of legal markets, as the informal economy persisted and expanded over time. Keith Hart introduced the term ‘informal sector’ in 1973 to emphasise the non-market activities that fall outside of formal production processes (Giugale, El-Diwany, & Everhart, 2000).

The informal economy exists parallel to formal economy and everywhere in the world, and in different forms, ranging from household work to informal markets, informal employment of young graduates, informal enterprises, and so on and so forth (Dana 2013a, 2013b). Informal entrepreneurship is so prevalent in emerging economies that scholars even term it the ‘real economy’ in such contexts (Potts, 2000). Given the significance of regional disparities, especially increasing informal entrepreneurship, the context has begun to receive more attention. The informal entrepreneurship literature has already identified the constraining and enabling roles played by regulatory institutions in the development of informal enterprises. Indeed, prevailing conditions in a particular region can change the conditions for entrepreneurship (Smallbone & Welter, 2012), and especially the economic situation (Thornton, Ribeiro & Urbano, 2011). Even if the informal enterprise is mostly regarded as individual behavior, entrepreneurial practices are believed to be profoundly influenced and shaped by the existing surroundings of the informal entrepreneur (Harrison & Leitch, 2010). For example, favorable policy measures, ease of doing business, local community, and the availability of financial capital or human capital can all influence startup activity and advance the entrepreneurial process in a very positive way (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). In return, informal entrepreneurship has been seen as contributing to local development by social value creation, promoting knowledge, learning, employment, and social and structural transformation (Dana, 2001; Naudé, 2013; Van Praag & Versloot, 2007).

Scholars have understood that informal entrepreneurship will prevail and sustain as it spreads around the world, from South Asia to South America, and from suburbs in North America to Eastern Europe, informal entrepreneurs exist everywhere (Webb et al., 2013; Williams & Nadin, 2010a, 2012). Moreover, researchers have identified resource and contextual constraints as the most pressing challenge for informal entrepreneurs (Webb et al., 2009; Williams & Nadin, 2010b). Now, academics have started to examine the resource-constrained environments in which informal entrepreneurs encounter challenges of resource mobilization (Mair & Marti, 2009; Welter, Smallbone & Pobol, 2015; Welter & Xheneti, 2013). As informal entrepreneurship is mostly a consequence of resource constraints and triumphs and sustains because of the effective resource mobilization process (Bhagavatula, 2009; Bhagavatula et al., 2010; Elfring & Hulsink, 2003; Mair & Marti, 2007, 2009; Webb et al., 2013; Webb et al., 2009). As the academic study of entrepreneurship continues to grow, greater attention is being paid to the effects of resource constraints on the long-term
viability and operation of ventures (Corbett & Katz, 2013). To combat these resource and contextual constraints, scholars highlight the importance of non-market strategies to perform resource mobilization activities.

For example, Dalton (1962) demonstrated that social relationships and values were more important in the organization of African markets. Moreover, Barth (1963) conceptualized an ‘economic sphere,’ in which all transactions follow the same rules. Indeed, Barth (1963) illustrated how entrepreneurs were embedded in structures on interpersonal relationships to carry out economic exchanges. However, Barth’s paper was criticized by Long (2003), who claimed that the author ignored individual actions and information concerning opportunities and alternatives. In turn, Long (2003) proposed an actor-oriented approach whereby social relationships represent the (evolving) outcomes of individual decision-making, demonstrating that entrepreneurs used their social networks to draw resources and networks in regions of Peru. In contemporary scholarship, scholars support this argument that social relations are crucial in influencing the entrepreneurial process (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003). Social networks are equally important for entrepreneurs in low-technological domains and emerging regions, as highlighted by Bhagavatula et al. (2010). The present study benefits from this base of existing research (e.g. Bhagavatula, 2009; Bhagavatula et al., 2010; Elfring & Hulsink, 2003; Mair & Marti, 2007, 2009; Webb et al., 2013; Webb at al., 2014; Webb et al., 2009) regarding the ways in which informal entrepreneurs within developing countries use their social and human capital to mobilize resources.

1.3 Social Capital and Human Capital Perspective of Entrepreneurship

1.3.1 Social Capital

The social capital perspective has become established as an influential theoretical perspective in entrepreneurship. Social capital can be defined as the “ability of actors to extract value from their social structures, networks, and memberships” (Davidsson & Honig, 2003, p. 307). Moreover, Davidsson and Honig (2003, p. 307) explain that [s]ocial networks provided by extended family, community-based or organizational relationships are theorized to supplement the effects of education, experience, and financial capital. Further, social capital enhances the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations (Coleman, 1988, p. 95). Social capital in this study is seen as “resources embedded in a social structure which are mobilized in purposive actions” (Lin, 1999, p. 35).

Social capital comprises the resources available to entrepreneurs as a result of their social networks, shared norms and values, and trust (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Uphoff, 2000). Similarly, Pretty and Ward (2001, p. 211) have distin-
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guished four central features of social capital: (a) relationships of trust; (b) reciprocity and exchanges; (c) common rules, norms and sanctions; and (d) connectedness, networks and groups.

Trust refers to the belief and confidence in other agents to behave as expected, in spite of uncertainties, risks and the possibility of them acting opportunistically (Lyon, 2000). Reciprocal exchange refers to informally enforced agreements to give goods, services, information or money in exchange for future compensation. It involves personalized and long-term exchange relationships and proceeds according to unwritten but well-understood rules specifying the level and direction of transfer of goods and services (Kranton, 1996). Norms define which actions are considered acceptable or unacceptable, and include customs of co-operation, reciprocity, avoiding deception, keeping verbal contracts, and deciding on acceptable sanctions (Lyon, 2000). Informal norms and rules are those that individuals use to shape their own everyday behavior (Pretty and Ward, 2001). Finally, connectedness refers to connections, interaction and co-operation within and between informal entrepreneurs, through informal networks or through social interaction among entrepreneurs.

1.3.1.1 Bridging, Bonding, Linking Social Capital (Functional Classifications)

This approach to entrepreneurial social capital accepts that relations can be both inter-personal and inter-organizational. Granovetter (1973) has focused on interpersonal ties as an important element of social capital. Interpersonal ties have different levels of strength depending on the combination of time, intimacy and trust (Granovetter, 1973). The strengths of ties leverage different benefits over time, e.g. weak ties can constitute an asset in seeking opportunity, employment, information and so forth (Granovetter, 1973). Intra-community ties are useful for resource-constrained entrepreneurs to start their businesses and extra-community ties may help the business grow (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Social capital can be classified as bridging, bonding and linking social capital according to function (Halpren, 2005).

Bonding social capital is “based on strong ties, such as having parents who owned businesses or close friends who owned businesses” while “bridging capital [is] based on weak ties” (Davidsson and Honig, 2003, p. 302). Some scholars agree that dense networks with strong ties are more likely to provide a smooth flow of information owing to trust from existing relationships (Coleman, 1988). These resources can then be transformed into opportunities (Uzzi, 1997). Closed networks are preferable in problem-solving and conflict resolution scenarios (Aldrich, Elam, & Reese, 1997; Larson & Starr, 1993). Bonding social capital creates strong links of trust, as is true of family members or colleagues within a firm, which tends to be exclusive and bind members together.

However, some scholars argue that opportunities not evenly distributed, as are resources. Therefore, sparse networks and weak ties are beneficial in tapping new
information and opportunities (Burt, 2000; Granovetter, 1973). Bridging ties arise from looser relationships that provide the entrepreneur with resources (such as information) and typically occur in various network relationships. Granovetter (1973) argues that strong ties may lead to saturation in the community owing to the ease of information flow. Therefore, weak ties with structural holes are more beneficial for the integration of entrepreneurs in the community (Burt, 2000).

Linking social capital reflects the relationship of a community or group with groups of a higher social order (Woolcock, 1998; Pretty, 2003). Linking social capital is the result of the weakest relationship but the most valuable outcome, as linking provides access and connection to power structures and institutions (Hawkings & Maurer, 2010). Unlike bonding, it is bridging and linking that is characterized by exposure to and the development of new ideas, values and perspectives (Woolcock et al., 2000).

Previous literature agrees that the social capital that an entrepreneur holds has a considerable influence on the entrepreneurial process and a venture’s development. However, the patterns of the network that are most beneficial for entrepreneurs remain debated, i.e., bonding and bridging social capital. Nahapiet (2011, p. 82) argues that “early debates about which forms of social capital are better— for example, bonding or bridging—are now being resolved with a greater recognition of their relative merits. What is effective in one context may be less so in another, but both are important.” It is hence crucial to find the right mixture of social capital (strong and weak ties) depending upon environmental and industrial conditions (Rowley, Behrens, & Krackhardt, 2000).

1.3.1.2 Benefits and Limitations of Social Capital

The social capital perspective demonstrates that various social relations, both formal and informal, provide the required resources to ventures and promote venture development (Anderson & Jack, 2002). Moreover, these social relations can be a resource in themselves (Coviello & Cox, 2006).

The strength of ties (the relationship between two entities) illustrates the importance of developing better and more beneficial networks (Granovetter, 1973). The content exchanged via ties can be either subjective (trust, norms, culture, etc.) or objective (information, resources, etc.) (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). Scholars discuss the benefits of social capital on an entrepreneur’s ability to enter or shape the emerging market (Hite & Hesterly, 2001; Rowley et al., 2000; Steier & Greenwood, 2000; Yli-Renko & Autio, 1998). Strong ties are associated with trust, problem-solving and the sharing of knowledge (Granovetter, 1983; Uzzi, 1997). Weak ties demonstrate a low degree of redundancy, meaning contacts do not spend much time together (Granovetter, 1973). However, weak ties constitute means that transmit information and opportunities between networks of strong ties and are often referred to as bridging weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). Network patterns have an important influence on information flow and the entrepreneurial actions of informal entrepreneurs (Sutter, et al, 2013). The advantages that entrepreneurs reap from
their networks are categorized as social capital (Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001; Putnam, 2000). In addition, social capital contributes to positive outcomes in informal economies e.g., social capital has proven beneficial in stimulating watershed management in India (Krishna and Uphoff, 2002) and waste collection in Bangladesh (Pargal, Gilligan and Huq, 2002). Recently, the concept of social capital has received attention for its contribution and potential in addressing constraints and resource mobilization (Halpern, 2005).

The prior literature discusses both the benefits and limitations of networks, implying that not all social relations are beneficial. The poor can find it difficult to access social capital in developing countries (Dowla, 2006), and the exclusion of the poor from social networks can even reproduce poverty (Cleaver, 2005). Moreover, sometimes the exclusion of not only the poor but also new entrants from social capital can constrain individual growth and result in gender inequalities as well (Mayoux, 2001). Women’s unequal position in a society limits their access to resources, as in the case of Cameroonian women who were less able to access resources in a microfinance project (Mayoux, 2001). Similar issues have been discussed by Silvey and Elmhirst (2003) in their research study in Indonesia.

1.3.2 Human Capital

Networks play an important role in the entrepreneurial process and a venture’s development. However, networks alone may not ensure success (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). Entrepreneurs rely on their human capital to create an environment in which firms can access networks and social capital (Jones, Macpherson, & Thorpe, 2010). One central outcome of social capital comprises access to human capital (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1999). Generally, “human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways” (Coleman, 1988, p. 100). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (2000) have conceptualized the way in which social capital contributes to knowledge and capabilities in organizations. Human capital (knowledge) is created when individuals anticipate, create, and access exchanges (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 2000). Entrepreneurs develop different networks due to their diverse knowledge and backgrounds (Shane, 2000). In return, the use of human capital relies on the existence of social structures and social networks (Davidsson & Honig, 2003), i.e., networks provide or limit the resources required by entrepreneurs.

Human capital contains both generic and specific elements (Becker, 1964). Generic elements of human capital include education, communication, and family background for general economic activity (Cooper, Gimeno-Gascon, & Woo, 1994). Honig (1998) discusses the concept of entrepreneur-specific human capital, i.e., the ability to seek and filter information into the potential search for resources and opportunities. Specific human capital could comprise entrepreneurship-specific human capital or venture-specific human capital. Venture-specific human capital includes “an entrepreneur’s knowledge of the venture domain relating to
business ownership, managerial skills, entrepreneurial skills and technical skills” (Ucbasaran, Westhead, & Wright, 2008, p. 155). Ucbasaran et al. (2008) view entrepreneurship-specific human capital as human capital with the most applicability in the domain of entrepreneurship, e.g. customers, suppliers, products, services etc. Information collection and processing provide an edge to entrepreneurs over their rivals (Casson & Wadeson, 2007; Venkataraman, 1997). The distinction between entrepreneurship-specific and venture-specific human capital helps draw attention to the possibility that entrepreneurs may gain knowledge and experience that is closely related to particular markets (i.e., venture-specific human capital), or alternatively gain knowledge and experience related to starting a new business, which need not be in the same sector as that startup (i.e., entrepreneurship-specific human capital).

Entrepreneurs’ human capital positively influences the entrepreneurial process (Bates, 1990; Cooper et al., 1994; Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Delmar & Shane, 2006; Dimov & Shepherd, 2005; Honig, 1998; Lee & Jones, 2008). For example, entrepreneurs with considerable human capital require less financial capital than those with lower human capital (Chandler & Hanks, 1998). Lee and Jones (2008) studied two nascent entrepreneurs’ groups, one with a formal university education and the other with minimal formal education. The two gained similar benefits from bonding social capital, but when it came to bridging social capital, the group with less formal education found it harder to develop bridging social capital using electronic communication. Similarly, an entrepreneur’s decision-making, knowledge and skill in building social contacts cannot be ignored (Gimeno, Folta, Cooper, and Woo, 1997). Entrepreneurs with less experience or knowledge of an industry and networks are not in a better position to access resources and identify opportunities (Mosey & Wright, 2007). Entrepreneurs discuss that people discover opportunities due to their superior information-processing abilities and search techniques (Shaver and Scott, 2002). Bates (1990) found that entrepreneurs with superior education were able to secure loans from commercial banks. Entrepreneurs with more experience in the industry are more likely to survive in business (Delmar & Shane, 2006) and are better-able to process information and evaluate opportunities (Baron & Ensley, 2006).

1.3.3 Research Objectives and Questions.

Existing research in organization and entrepreneurship fields discusses resource mobilization and has increased our understanding of the ways in which entrepreneurs deal with resource constraints (Welter et al., 2017). However, most entrepreneurship and resource mobilization literature explain entrepreneurial behavior with an emphasis on formal rules, stable contexts in developed economy contexts. Indeed, existing literature has primarily focused on stable contexts, and most insights come from developed economies and advanced industrial and technological sectors, with fewer direct insights provided regarding how resource-constrained entrepreneurs respond when faced with
environmental instability in developing economies (Mair and Marti, 2009; Puffer, McCarthy and Boisot, 2010; Sutter et al., 2013). Therefore, relatively little research has examined issues such how entrepreneurs create and manage firms in the informal sector or make decisions to acquire certain resources (Foss et al., 2007) in emerging economies. This issue of entrepreneurial resource constraint and resource mobilization is even more pressing in the case of informal entrepreneurs who have unregistered business activity, as legal sources of funding are not widely available (indeed, only with limited microfinance exceptions). In addition, target customers are generally unwilling to pay at market rates (Williams & Nadin, 2012). Informal business activity is present almost everywhere in the world, and in fact is increasing (Welter, et al., 2015). This issue of entrepreneurial resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs requires attention, raising the question of how do informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources? In particular, knowledge pertaining to the impact of social and human capital on informal entrepreneurs’ resource mobilization strategies requires scholarly attention. Therefore, one of the challenges addressed in this study is to provide insights concerning the aforementioned research issue, i.e., resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this study aims to analyze the impacts of social and human capital on the resource mobilization strategies of informal entrepreneurs.

In acknowledging the importance of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs, this research examines resource mobilization among entrepreneurs operating in the informal domain. I intend to study resource mobilization from a social and human capital perspective, a view that has to date largely been advanced from a western perspective. Extending current debates regarding resource mobilization into a different context of entrepreneurship (i.e., informal) represents a major contribution of this study. Informal firms in developing economies represent traditional and nascent market capitalism (Bhagavatula, 2009, 2010), and studying informal entrepreneurship would facilitate a deeper understanding of how informal entrepreneurs address resource constraints.

Resource mobilization from a social and human capital perspective holds promise for informal entrepreneurship. The social and human capital perspective is an area of inquiry within the field of entrepreneurship that is well-suited to studying entrepreneurs in emerging economies. First, informal ventures often face severe constraints and are forced to devise creative problem-solving strategies. Second, informal enterprises emerge from incongruences or gaps that are not covered by public or formal private institutions, and the mobilization of resources often occurs in the absence of legal support. In these industries, the competitive advantage one entrepreneur gains over another is not the result of education, as there are no formal educational programs that train people to work in these informal industries (Bhagavatula, 2009, 2010), but rather social networks, which provide informal entrepreneurs with the necessary resources.
Focusing at the micro level, I aim to understand how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources to address various resource constraints relevant to their entrepreneurial ventures. The study understands resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs from the lens of social and human capital theory. Social and human capital has the capacity to increase access to resources. In order to achieve this understanding, it is important to understand how these informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry function: what are their resource mobilization strategies and their outcomes? This understanding of the mobilization of resources might help facilitate an understanding of the ways in which informal entrepreneurs act when faced with constrained and challenging situations. To summarize, resource mobilization is primarily a consequence of the resource-constrained activity of informal entrepreneurs. The forms of resource mobilization that informal entrepreneurs develop constitutes their social capital, while their stock of knowledge forms their human capital. The central guiding research objective underlying this study is to understand the impact of social and human capital that influences resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs.

This research supports and extends some of the arguments discussed in the previous two sections. The research questions based on themes identified from existing literature are:

RQ 1.1 How does the human capital of informal entrepreneurs influence their resource mobilization activity?

RQ 1.2 How does the social capital of informal entrepreneurs influence their resource mobilization activity?

1.4 Research Setting

Given the theoretical positioning of the study, I selected Pakistan as the setting in which to conduct the research. In 2016, Pakistan was announced as an emerging economy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2016). The focus of this study is not directly on context, but all entrepreneurship activity takes place in some context, providing a uniqueness to its entrepreneurial activity (Welter, 2011; Welter & Xheneti, 2013; Welter et al., 2015). Similarly, understanding entrepreneurial resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in the context of an emerging economy might distinctively influence informal entrepreneurial activity and bring new insights that can add to previous conversations on informal entrepreneurship or contextual entrepreneurship.

Emerging economies vary in their characteristics relative not only to developed countries but also other emerging economies (Emerging Market Index, 2017). In fact, the entire emerging market (EM) group is highly heterogeneous, and such differences provide specific contexts for nurturing
entrepreneurial activities (EMI, 2017). Thus, the immediate environment may provide different opportunities and challenges for entrepreneurship. Given that all nations in the EM group present unique contexts.

Emerging markets are those countries that have not achieved a significant degree of industrialization; they are defined as low-income and rapid-growth economies that have experienced institutional changes such as trade openness and liberalization (IMF, 2016). Other terms that are often used interchangeably include developing countries, third world, underdeveloped countries, and non-industrialized countries. The criteria used to measure state development also differ across institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF. In order to share this label, EMs exhibit certain common features like a less functional institutional context relative to advanced markets, low average income levels, poor market efficiency, and rapid population growth. Businesses in EMs often face institutional inefficiencies due to corruption and inefficient governance (IMF, 2016; EMI, 2017). This group includes South Asian nations alongside Latin American, African and Eastern European countries. According to the IMF, the world can be divided into advanced economies and emerging economies as a means of understanding and predicting economic development trends. Despite all these constraints, EMs represent unique contexts for potential businesses, which cannot be ignored in policy, research and educational agendas and conversations (Acs & Virgill, 2010).

The concepts of entrepreneurship and micro enterprises are used quite interchangeably in Pakistan. The Small Medium Enterprise and Developing Authority (SMEDA) is a central government institution that deals with micro enterprises. Regarding the business environment, Pakistan is a country in which conducting business is every day becoming increasingly challenging due to a range of factors. In an enterprise survey, the World Bank identified primary environment obstacles for businesses in Pakistan, including corruption, political instability, an inadequately educated workforce, electricity shortages, infrastructure, tax rates, customs and trade regulations. These serious internal issues are severely affecting Pakistan’s business sector. The high cost of production, depreciation of the Pakistani rupee, double-digit inflation and high cost of financing have compromised the business growth. Different types of resource and environmental constraints are currently imposed on the business sector, in particular for small and medium firms. Industries are suffering from job losses and the closure of manufacturing plants. However, against all odds there are numerous examples of flourishing entrepreneurship in Pakistan. For example, entrepreneurial ventures from the event planning industry have not only managed to survive but are quite active and growing. They offer a particularly interesting context to observe efforts towards the process of managing within a resource-constrained environment.
This dissertation focuses on one type of informal enterprise: informal event planning. In the last decade, the demand for event planning grew rapidly in the country, but large event planning firms were not established due to a lack of resources and strict governmental policies. Instead, small informal firms benefited from governmental policies.

The event planning industry includes events of all sizes and types. It includes the planning, management and execution of events. Event planning ventures represent a subset of informal enterprises that attempt to meet the social and economic needs of unemployment, job and wealth creation through informal service delivery and informal project management. These ventures have at the core of their mission the development and use of strategic, creative, technical and logistical elements. Like other formal ventures, informal event planning ventures address two key issues of entrepreneurship: financial returns and socio-economic impact. However, they do this through informal business activity. Informal event planning ventures include for-profit events, non-profit events and government operations, and deploy informal means of entrepreneurship to meet social and economic needs. In spite of the variety of events covered by the industry, they have different ways of mobilizing and arranging resources from a variety of sources, e.g., third-party, beneficiaries, employees, family, and friends.

Pakistan’s event planning industry is on the rise. Most of the entrepreneurs who enter the industry start their businesses on a small scale as informal micro enterprises. Micro enterprises are defined as “projects or businesses in trading/manufacturing/services/agriculture that will lead to livelihood improvement and income generation, who are either self-employed or employ few individuals not exceeding 10 (excluding seasonal labor)” (State Bank of Pakistan, 2012, p. 1). In Pakistan, micro enterprises operate in numerous fields such as food stalls, livestock, and the service sector. Micro enterprises in Pakistan traditionally lacked financial services (SBP, 2012). Informal micro enterprising (i.e., starting an unregistered business) is a common practice and enjoys social legitimacy and acceptability. This level of legitimacy of informal business activity has helped contribute to solutions to social problems. One more significant problem is unemployment among the educated youth, with entrepreneurship offering a potential solution.

The event planning industry in Pakistan has developed dramatically over the past decade, with firms’ increased pursuit of competitiveness and growth strategies (Adeem, 2014). Even though the current political and economic challenges both locally (Pakistan) and globally have significantly reduced the availability of many kinds of resources, and especially financial resources, a growing number of public and private events in Pakistan is seeing professional, creative and knowledgeable entrepreneurs prevail. Event planning never stops, thus, missing a critical resource is not an option. These circumstances presented me with the opportunity to assess variations in informal event planning ventures.
and resource mobilizing activities, and how informal entrepreneurs navigate through different challenges.

Thus, the purpose of the study is to understand resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs from the perspectives of social and human capital theory.

1.5 Method

The study focuses on how initial resource mobilization was conducted at the time of the founding and shortly after the founding of a business, i.e., the early years of operations after launching a business. For this purpose, the firms that were selected were at least four years old, rendering it easier to look into initial resource search both at the time of their founding and in the early years of operation thereafter. The data were collected retrospectively with the aim of understanding entrepreneurial activity and actions. Scholars suggest that entrepreneurship scholars should be wise enough to ground social mechanisms in human action (Korsgaard, Berglund, Thrane, & Blenker, 2016). One such example emphasizing human action is effectuation theory (Sarasvathy, 2001), an entrepreneurial activity that affects resource mobilization behaviors. Thus, entrepreneurial activity is the focus of this study.

I adopted a comparative case-based approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2013). The primary concern was to comprehend what constitutes resources within the context of event planning. Empirical evidence provides a qualitative study of 15 informal event planning ventures. All of the ventures included in the dataset belong to one province, Punjab. I used a purposeful and snowball sampling frame to extract informal event planning ventures as a dataset for this dissertation. The sample of 15 event planning firms used in this study constitutes a professionally evaluated dataset created from a survey of event planning experts who are engaged and involved in event planning and management from the last 20-25 years in Pakistan. The ventures included in the dataset cover a variety of events ranging from social (health, education, gender equality, environment, sports), commercial (concerts, fashion shows), national (meetings, conferences, seminars, consortiums), and customized (weddings, birthdays, engagements) events. This sector of event planning addresses the principal areas of public life and activity in Pakistan.

1.6 Intended Contributions

This thesis is primarily connected to the entrepreneurship field. The main issue that adds new insight from this study is of the informal enterprise perspective. Resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is an important perspective with significant practical implications for policymakers in Pakistan.
I hope that the findings of this study will prove useful for informal entrepreneurship and the resource mobilization perspective. My first contribution concerns the generation of accounts of informal entrepreneurs from the event planning industry of Pakistan. Second, I employ social and human capital theory to understand resource mobilization actions among informal micro entrepreneurs. This framework paves the way to understanding inter-organizational gains through informal entrepreneurial networks, such as the exchange of knowledge, resources, opportunities and contacts through networks and alliances among suppliers, distributors, customers and collaborators, thus facilitating the flow of resources in networks. This analysis leads to the discussion of the view of resource mobilization as collaborative resource mobilization as an alternative to competitive resource mobilization, whereby the flow of resources in the networks remains competitive when it comes to business rivalry. Collaborative resource mobilization refers to resource mobilization through competitors’ networks and alliances, for the advancement of business goals at founding and in later stages. This thesis found that informal entrepreneurs in the events industry in Pakistan collaborate frequently (both contractually and non-contractually) to allow the flow of subjective (information, legitimacy, norms,) and objective (labor, venues, clients, supplies, raw material) resources within networks. This collaborative resource mobilization among competitors’ networks is unique to resource mobilization strategies, as explained in prior literature on networks and resource mobilization. Prior literature recognizes the importance of symbiotic networks of small and large firms to compete in international markets (e.g. Dana Etemad & Wright, 2000, 2001 & 2008). However, in this thesis the collaborations are formed locally among informal entrepreneurs to address various resource constraints but at the same time these firms continue to compete in the same market.

The fact that informal enterprises are important to a nation’s economy was first recognized by Hart (1973). Nevertheless, what happens at the micro level and what are the entrepreneurial activities to sustain and survive in a developing economy constitute issues that also require attention. Previous literature shows that informal entrepreneurs rely on their kin-based networks and informal business collaborations and formal-informal linkages to develop and gather resources (Sutter et. al, 2013; Siqueira et al., 2014; Webb et al., 2009, 2013, 2014). This study aims to extend the current understanding of how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources.

Finally, this dissertation transcends existing explanations that mostly see informal entrepreneurship as a survivalist activity. The current study elaborates upon creative problem solving and the entrepreneurial endeavors of informal entrepreneurs. This understanding may be used to address informal business activity and to refine discussion regarding the formalization of informal firms. I hope that the research agenda to search for the better theorization of informal entrepreneurship by Webb et al. (2009) can be addressed by the research presented here. For example, I assume and suggest that informal
entrepreneurships should not be considered marginalized activities, but rather a platform where the considerable potential of creative entrepreneurial activity is present. Non-criminal informal entrepreneurial activity should be considered integrated within different economic activities.

1.7 Dissertation Structure

Chapter 1 lays the foundation for the following chapters of the dissertation. The remainder of the thesis is organized as follows.

Chapter 2 discusses important concepts of resource mobilization and the social and human capital theory of entrepreneurship. Different concepts have been discussed with relevance to resource mobilization and the entrepreneurial process.

Chapter 3 provides a conceptual review, definitions and a brief discussion of important concepts related to informal entrepreneurship. This chapter ends with some comments on advancing this thesis and its research objective.

Chapter 4 explains the research setting. The study domain for data collection in this thesis is the events industry of Pakistan. This is an important industry with diverse stakeholders. This chapter identifies the historical patterns of evolution in this industry in Pakistan, along with the importance of events in Pakistan.

Chapter 5 outlines the research design and the means of data collection and data analysis. Data were organized and analyzed by NVivo 11 software.

Chapter 6 summarizes the 15 cases studied for this dissertation and provides a brief overview of resource mobilization activities.

Chapter 7 details the empirical findings and examines them in light of the existing literature. In explaining and understanding resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs, the empirical findings are divided into resource mobilization activities and the role of social and human capital.

Chapter 8 concludes the dissertation along with contributions, future research, limitations, and implications. Some methodological considerations are also described.

1.8 Definitions used in this Thesis

(Informal) Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship in this dissertation is defined as “as creation and organizing of new economic activity (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007, p. 15) in informal and formal ventures” (Author, 2018). An entrepreneur is a person who engages in the creation or organization of an economic activity (Davidsson, 1991).

Informal enterprise “is the private unit not registered with the authorities and no complete set of formal accounts kept” (Hussmann, 2005, 3).
Resource Mobilization: In organization studies and the entrepreneurship literature, resource mobilization refers to acts of arranging resources that help entrepreneurs to deal with resource-related constraints, i.e., “the ability to cope with stressful situations or unusual problems by putting available resources to efficient use or ingenious use” (Armstrong, 2015, p. 268).

Social Capital: Social capital in this study is seen as “resources embedded in a social structure which are mobilized in purposive actions” (Lin, 1999, p. 35). Bonding social capital is “based on strong ties, such as having parents who owned businesses or close friends who owned businesses” while “bridging capital [is] based on weak ties” (Davidsson and Honig, 2003, p. 302). Linking social capital reflects the relationship of a community or group with groups of higher social order (Woolcock, 1998; Halpren, 2005).

Human Capital: In general, “human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways” (Coleman, 1998, p. 100). Generic elements of human capital include education, communication, family background, and technical know-how for general economic activity (Cooper et al., 1994). Entrepreneur-specific human capital is the ability to seek and filter information into a potential search for resources (Honig, 1998). Venture-specific human capital is “an entrepreneur’s knowledge of the venture domain relating to customers, suppliers, products, and services” (Ucbasaran et al., 2006, p. 29).
2. Resource Mobilization

This chapter provides an overview of resource mobilization developed and studied in the entrepreneurship literature. Resource mobilization largely demonstrates how ventures originate and grow in economically constrained environments. Given that informal ventures operate under resource constraints, resource mobilization through networks seems to be applicable and appropriate for an understanding of informal enterprises’ development. Entrepreneurs and managers use entrepreneurial networks and knowledge to mobilize resources in penurious environments.

2.1 Entrepreneurship

There exist several valuable definitions of the phenomenon of entrepreneurship. However, Klein (2008) as facilitated a simpler understanding of the different strands of entrepreneurship by dividing entrepreneurial functions into three categories: occupational, structural and functional. The first notion sees the individual as the unit of analysis (Klein, 2008), such as in terms of self-employment or owning and managing a business (Acs, 2006). The dynamic perspective of occupational entrepreneurship (Acs, Arenius, Hay, & Minniti, 2004) reviews the entrepreneurial characteristics and traits that distinguish entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs (e.g., entrepreneurial mindsets, the level of education, self-efficacy, psychology, backgrounds, etc.) (Delmar & Davidsson, 2000). The occupational perspective merely investigates some business owners (Acs, 2006). According to Shane (2000), the occupational perspective has received considerable attention in the entrepreneurship literature. Meanwhile, the structural perspective focuses on industry and organizations as the unit of analysis (Klein, 2008). It identifies those environments that are likely to support or constrain entrepreneurship, such as technological change (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). Institutional pressures in particular are considered critical (Jack & Anderson, 2002) in influencing entrepreneurship according to the structural perspective. Shane (2000) has distinguished structures as political, economic or socio-cultural. In the structural view, the newness of entrepreneurship represents the key aspect i.e. no act of entrepreneurship is considered if economic activity executed through the existing organization. The functional view sees entrepreneurship as a new economic activity (Davidsson, 2006). It returns to the scholarly domains of Schumpeterian resource combinations, means-end relationships (Schumpeter, 2013; Shane, 2000), and opportunity identification and exploration (Ardichvili, Cardozo, & Ray, 2003; Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Kirzner, 1997).
The functional perspective enables us to see entrepreneurship as resource recombining, resulting in value creation and new economic activity influenced by a particular environment. Function constitutes an important theme used to define entrepreneurs, as entrepreneurs must be more active than other employees and even managers (Utsch, Rauch, & Rothfuss, 1999), being both owners and managers of their ventures (Gartner, 1990).

According to Scott (2001), entrepreneurship does not occur spontaneously due to the environment, but rather requires individuals to pursue opportunities. Hence, the environment alone cannot completely predict entrepreneurial understanding. Along these lines, Frese (2009) argues that entrepreneurs’ actions should form the starting point for theorizing. Indeed, it is the initiatives of entrepreneurs in the context of firms that result in new businesses, new economic activity and the establishment of firms (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007). Unlike the occupational and structural perspective, the functional perspective does not limit the act of entrepreneurship to certain structural boundaries or some heroic image of entrepreneurs. It takes the point that any invention may commercialize regardless of existing or newly created firms, or even through trading on the market (Brown, Davidsson, & Wiklund, 2001; Sarasvathy &Venkataraman, 2011). Thus, it is open to any value creation as a result of the creation of new and continued economic activity (Davidsson, 1991; Davidsson, Delmar, & Wiklund, 2006; Davidsson, Steffens, Gordon, & Reynolds, 2008). Nevertheless, it is also important that these entrepreneurial actions are understood in the context of firms by addressing the pursuit of opportunities, because entrepreneurial activities alone mean little (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007). Such value creation is influenced by its surrounding environment (Jack & Anderson, 2002). However, in return, economic activity affects not only one or certain individuals, but its entire environment, including markets and industry (Sarason, Dean, & Dillard, 2006; Sarason, Dillard, & Dean, 2010). For example, a large informal economy in less developed countries represents one indicator of this informal value creation process in a given circumstance (Bigsten, Kimyu, & Lundvall, 2000; De Soto, 2000).

Entrepreneurship in this dissertation is defined as “as creation and organizing of new economic activity (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007, p. 15) in informal and formal ventures” (Author, 2018). An entrepreneur is a person who engages in the creation or organization of an economic activity (Davidsson, 1991).

In order to explore informal business as affected by its immediate context, this functional view of entrepreneurship seems quite relevant and suitable for the overall research objective due to its practicality. Indeed, the functional perspective of the enterprise would allow economic activity to be viewed both within formal and informal entrepreneurial ventures and would mark entrepreneurship as long it is new economic activity.
2.2 Resource Constraints

Resources enable actors to enact limitations (Feldman, 2004) in social and economic practices. Resources are allocative and provide the ability to dominate (Feldman, 2004). An entrepreneur’s resources include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, information and knowledge under his or her control that may serve to improve efficiency and effectiveness (Daft, 1983). In the absence of required resources, entrepreneurs face constraints to start and build ventures.

According to the dictionary definition, constraints are the conditions or bounds that limit individuals to engage in a particular task (Dictionary.cambridge.org). In entrepreneurial organizations, constraints can be external (Amabile, 1996) or internal (Dolmans et al., 2014). However, in the entrepreneurship literature, the majority of constraints discussed are material internal constraints. Internal constraints as identified by Dolmans et al (2014) are resource constraints, i.e., financial, capacity and capability constraints. Financial constraints are related to monetary and cash scarcity, while capacity constraints are operational constraints, i.e., the capacity to provide produce services or products. Capability constraints mean that entrepreneurs lack relevant human resources.

Research evidence to date has produced mixed results regarding whether resource constraints inhibit or enhance entrepreneurial processes and outcomes. For example, while resources are required to perform one’s job, not having all prerequisites at hand may stretch employees to think up different ways of doing their work (Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Resource constraints might foster creativity (Schulze & Hoegl, 2008), but may also preclude experimentation (Bradley, Wiklund, & Shepherd, 2011). Resource shortages also buffer firms against environmental shocks in times of distress (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003; Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme, & Weggeman, 2011).

2.3 Resource Mobilization

In organization studies and the entrepreneurship literature, resource mobilization refers to acts of arranging resources that help entrepreneurs to deal with resource-related constraints, i.e., “the ability to cope with stressful situations or unusual problems by putting available resources to efficient use or ingenious use” (Armstrong, 2015, p. 268). Resource mobilization is an activity performed by entrepreneurs to arrange useful resources as required by entrepreneurs to develop in economically suppressed environments. Most ventures begin with a small amount of capital and often struggle to survive resource-related and other contextual constraints. Entrepreneurs can face resource constraints due to a lack of external sources of financing. Entrepreneurial pursuits are inherently uncertain (Kirzner, 1997;
Schumpeter, 2013), especially in the case of informal ventures that require the trial-and-error assembly of resources. To confront such resource constraints, entrepreneurs rely on their savings and seek to minimize costs as far as possible (Bhide, 2010). Entrepreneurial activity becomes more challenging for entrepreneurs when they face resource scarcity due to a lack of personal resources and the inaccessibility of external resources (Shane, 2003). This situation can appear at any stage of an entrepreneur’s venture and pushes the entrepreneur to search for new resources. Scholars suggest that resource constraints should not be ignored as attempts at ignoring resource constraints and problems means ignoring the opportunity (Lee, Lim & Song, 2005). Baker and Nelson (2005) have opined that firms that behave as if they are not resource-constrained are simply damaging themselves. If resource constraints are encountered, firms have at least three alternatives: 1) they may maintain current operations, downsize, or even abandon efforts altogether; 2) they may choose to alleviate deficiencies by resource-seeking, such as identifying an equity investor; or 3) they may engage in resource mobilization creatively using what is available or co-opting what is needed from others in their network (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Starr & MacMillian, 1990).

Each year, hundreds of millions of people are engaged in informal entrepreneurial business activities, attracting interest from individuals, government policymakers, and researchers. The informal entrepreneurship literature is primarily focused on personal traits (i.e., ‘who’ is an informal entrepreneur), whereas the actions of informal entrepreneurs during startup and initial development have only recently come to attention (Williams, 2010). Instead, considerable emphasis was placed on the identification of factors, characteristics, and conditions that foster informal entrepreneurship. The existing literature has acknowledged the importance of resources and argues that resource decisions are among the most important and challenging issues faced by informal firms, especially when they enter the informal sector to start their ventures (Kistruck, Webb, Sutter & Ireland, 2011; Siqueira, et al., 2014; Webb et al., 2009, 2013). The present focus in the informal entrepreneurship literature is on the constraints and challenges faced by informal entrepreneurs. However, this dissertation aims to focus on the ways in which informal entrepreneurs engage in resource mobilization activities. Conceptually I draw upon a social capital and human capital perspective of entrepreneurship.

2.3.1 Resource Identification

Entrepreneurs’ identification of resources requires a clear understanding of necessary resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This results from the set of actual or potential resources at one’s disposal (Bourgeois, 1981) relative to the perceived resource demand (George, 2005; Mishina, Pollock, & Porac, 2004).

The identification of required resources is important as it can lead to either the success or failure of ventures depending upon the accuracy and
appropriateness of the evaluation of resource need. Brush et al. (2001) argue that the way in which resources are identified and developed in earlier stages of ventures represents an extraordinary challenge for entrepreneurs. Further, these authors argue that each resource choice has significant implications for a venture’s survival and development, and many ventures fail each year as they cannot find the appropriate resources (Brush et al., 2001).

Resource identification is largely subjective and relies on entrepreneurs’ decision-making skills. The prior findings within the broader entrepreneurship research suggest that entrepreneurial human capital, i.e., prior knowledge, influences the ways in which firms judge opportunities and identify networks and resources (Cai et al., 2014). They can then make intelligent decisions to shape opportunities accordingly (Sonenshein, 2014). Baker and Nelson (2005) suggest that entrepreneurs’ resource identification is as important as identifying opportunities and their own human capital, i.e., knowledge of resources is crucial in embracing new opportunities and problems (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). Entrepreneurial knowledge is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs enter strategic networking (Cai et al., 2014), access resources (Baker et al., 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (Salunke et al., 2011), or shape social meanings in contextual settings (Mair & Marti, 2009). Entrepreneurs use various means of identifying the resource to deal with a particular resource constraint. When they perceive themselves as deficient in a resource, they may lower the resource demand or abandon existing plans for growth (Dolmans et al., 2014). However, when they have abundant resources, they tend to prioritize business growth and development plans (Dolmans et al., 2014). When an entrepreneur perceives resource constraints, he or she may believe that the situation demands control over the resource deficit (Baker & Nelson, 2005). In the same situation, another entrepreneur might perceive some form of resource munificence and pursue firm growth strategies (Edelman & Yli-Renko, 2010).

Resource need identification leads to decisions of internal coping or external coping strategies for resource mobilization (Dolmans et al., 2014). Internal coping implies a selection among the effects that can be established with a given set of resources (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy et al., 2008; Baker & Nelson, 2005), whereas external resource acquisition generally relies on outside parties for the resources required (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

2.3.2 Resource Gathering

Current entrepreneurship scholarship on resource constraints and resource mobilization includes different explanations for how entrepreneurs create something from nothing. Most research has focused on the different ways of gathering resources, i.e., the ways in which individuals seek resources in response to the scarcity of their resource environments. Existing research indicates that new ventures can purchase a variety of resources through financial resources (Brush et al., 2001). Internal developments such as using entrepreneurial
knowledge for creative problem-solving in resource-constrained scenarios by combining existing resources with new ones in novel ways (Sirmon & Hitt, 2003) and utilizing resources at hand (Gedajlovic et al., 2013) enables entrepreneurs to make do with limited resources (Baker et al., 2003; Baker and Nelson, 2005). The final major route for pooling resources in the new venture is through networks (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003) and social resourcing (Sarasvathy et al., 2008), in order to access instrumental resources such as social capital for scarce resources (Gedajlovic et al., 2013). Gathered resources are put into recombination for use in pursuing opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The acquisition of resources is crucial to creating products and services.

2.3.3 Resource Utilization

Nevertheless, merely searching for resources provides no guarantee that entrepreneurs will be successful in their ventures’ developments. This is because attaining, repurposing and redefining resources is also crucial for the successful establishment of ventures (Feldman, 2004; Feldman et al., 2011). Indeed, it is not simply the possession of a resource that helps or guarantees value creation, but effective utilization of resources have strong meanings (Misra & Kumar, 2000).

2.4 Resource Mobilization Components

Resource mobilization is a concept that is used to deal with constraints. This idea suggests that tools and objects may have innate qualities and the potential to become a resource, but crucially until an action taken and they are being used (i.e., enacted within a resource bundle), they do not have value. How a potential resource is used determines what type of resource it becomes, linked to a particular solution (Feldman et al., 2011).

Unlike the opportunistic view of entrepreneurship focusing on opportunity as a starting point of the entrepreneurial process, the resource mobilization perspective focuses on putting resources to efficient use and exploiting opportunities accordingly.

Resource mobilization is the resource constraint-driven entrepreneurial process that seeks to solve problems by being proactive, and it is especially useful for young firms in order to circumvent difficult circumstances (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Additional terms similar to resource mobilization and used in the literature include adaptation and resourcefulness. Adaptation is the adjustment of a system from its current state (Miller & Friesen, 1980). It can occur without the convergence of design and execution and may involve planning and using routines (Baker et al., 2003). Resourcefulness is a concept whereby the entrepreneurs involved in resourceful strategies, e.g., bricolage can use the resources at hand both to see what can accomplish (effectuation) and to ascertain
how they can meet preexisting goals using these resources (causation) (Baker et al., 2003). This behavior of resourcefulness involves continuous activities and processes of adaptation within the limitations of the context, i.e., a dynamic process characterizing plurality (Radjou, Prabhu, & Ahuja, 2012). This plurality at times refers to the phenomenon of creative problem-solving with few resources (Baker et al., 2013), and sometimes it speculates about growth and competitiveness through resourcefulness (Bradley, McMullan, Atmadja, Simiyu & Artz, 2011).

Resource mobilization is a meta concept that focuses on entrepreneurial actions in the presence of contextual limits in order to cope with constraints and manage problems in a way that can lead to creative problem-solving, that can go beyond adaptation and resourcefulness. In so doing, it focuses on resources, actions, and context.

### 3.4.1 Focus on Resources

Resource mobilization focuses on resources as the central theme. Nevertheless, a resource cannot be a real resource until it is in use. Prior to this stage, a resource with a particular value is just a potential resource, e.g., objects, tools, ideas, history, and skills (Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010; Feldman, 2004; Phillips & Tracey, 2007). Resources can have both physical and social value, e.g. wood and lorry gears for the development of Danish wind turbines (Garud & Karnoe, 2003), community, people, trust, for business legitimacy (Feldman, 2004; Feldman et al., 2011), knowledge and contextual understanding to maneuver in unfavorable circumstances (Baker et al., 2013; Banerjee & Campbell, 2009), etc. Both potential resources and resource in use can be resources at hand, which means that they are resources that entrepreneurs personally own or have attained through networking, or that are available cheaply or freely (Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2014). Resource mobilization is generally practiced in constrained environments to identify and gather resources (Baker, 2007; Powell & Baker, 2014). Resource identification and gathering and utilization activity demands that entrepreneurs be well-informed and alert to their environment (Valliere, 2013).

### 3.4.2 Focus on Actions

Resource mobilization focuses on the activities of real entrepreneurs, as opposed to the classic view of entrepreneurship (Bradley et al., 2011). It has already been discussed that the functional perspective of entrepreneurship has moved the enterprise discourse from economic value to human development as a general phenomenon (Sarasvathy & Venkataraman, 2011). Resource mobilization is about overcoming the limits to action (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Baker and Nelson (2005) found patterns of practice of entrepreneurs to disregard constraints and to test solutions. Entrepreneurs and firms can exercise their tolerance for
ambiguity and setbacks and their ability to improvise and take advantage of emerging resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Garud and Karnoe (2003) noted that the Danish wind turbine industry achieved superior technologies through practices of piecing together and accumulating artifacts, tools, rules, and knowledge in order to shape actors in the domains of design, production, use, evaluation and regulation (Garud and Karnoe, 2003). Knowledgeable actions allow entrepreneurs to identify opportunities and resources to regulate and direct entrepreneurial behaviors. Information and knowledge of entrepreneurs play a crucial role in creating and managing an organization to pursue the opportunity (Misra & Kumar, 2000).

Kodithuwakk and Rosa (2002) found that it is not the presence of opportunities but the ability to mobilize resources that has resulted in the survival and success of Sri Lankan villagers’ businesses. Thus, the basis of highly successful resource mobilization activities is related to a diverse set of skillful actions with various origins and meanings. For example, Bradley et al. (2011) identified learning, behavioral, financial and social repertoires when dealing with problems related to starting a business.

Rather than conceding, entrepreneurs tend to seek information and test the limits of their boundaries (Gaglio & Katz, 2001). Making do occurs through the permissive flexibility of resource combinations and their ascribed social meanings (Audretsch & Feldman, 2004), defining resources as what they could do, versus what they should do, for new purposes (Ciborra, 1992, 1996). This resource combination demands entrepreneurial knowledge and various resources.

According to Burt (2009), networks provide entrepreneurs with required financial resources, information resources, and human resources. Wiltbank et al. (2006), suggest that entrepreneurs in unpredictable markets seek to co-create the future (re-construct the environment), not through prediction but through involving self-selected stakeholders in viable partnerships, and by doing this, they take control over and co-create the immediate future. Networks may also help in reducing costs related to the information search for resources (Dubini & Aldrich, 1991). To summarize, entrepreneurs engage in creative activities to accumulate resources through entrepreneurial actions, i.e., networking, information and knowledge gathering or resources. Numerous studies have been conducted on the importance of networks in providing resources, but only a few have studied networking activities among informal entrepreneurs to mobilize resources.

### 3.4.3 Focus on Context

Resource mobilization can occur in problem-solving situations that can be either expected or unexpected. This link to the environment is inevitable due to the possession of resources by different actors (Garud & Karnoe, 2001) as well as an entrepreneur’s embeddedness in the external environment (Baker et al., 2003). Welter and Xheneti (2013) believe that contexts are necessary for resource mobilization behaviors as they provide both opportunities and restrictions to

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entrepreneurial actions. For example, weak, uncertain and early stage transition economies appear conducive to resource mobilization activity (Welter & Xheneti, 2013), as evidenced in depleted communities and peripheral areas (e.g., Heilbrunn, 2010; Johnstone & Lionais, 2004). The need for resource mobilization becomes more crucial and prominent in informal economies (Webb et al., 2009). Resource mobilization activity becomes inevitable during the emergence of new institutional arrangements according to scholars such as Lanzara (1999). Indeed, Stark (1996) argues that new institutions (e.g., new markets) are built through the redeployment of available resources as a means of meeting the demands of changing markets through reusing and redeploying resources (Ciborra, 1996).

Resource mobilization is made possible when an entrepreneur has a link with the wider environment in the form of organizations or networks that not only provide tangible and intangible resources but also a cultural identity. Such context sensitivity is quite high in South Asia and is reflected in its entrepreneurial activity (Bhatti, 2013). This contextual sensitivity can also force entrepreneurs into a challenging situation, demanding both conformism and competitiveness simultaneously (Kumar, 2011). Overall, resource mobilization is nurtured because of a degree of tolerance for ambiguity (Bhatti, 2013; Birchnell, 2011; Kumar, 2011) that allows for survival and progress even with a small resource base (Birchnell, 2011). Entrepreneurs need both economic and social values to create and develop their ventures. Therefore, unique forms of entrepreneurship become prominent in contextualized entrepreneurial activity (Welter & Xheneti, 2013).

Thus, contextual bounds on resource mobilization are limits that endow resources and that can either enable or constrain resource mobilization activity’s different effects on entrepreneurial ventures, resulting in distinctive forms of entrepreneurship (Smallbone & Welter, 2001).

2.5 Social Capital Mobilization

2.5.1 Social Capital

Social capital in this study is seen as “resources embedded in a social structure which are mobilized in purposive actions” (Lin, 1999, p. 35). This definition accompanies economic behavior affected by social relations and the purposive actions of actors embedded in a system of social relationships (Granovetter, 1985). Resource mobilizing actions are performed by actors, i.e., informal entrepreneurs in this study. The actor in this study is the informal entrepreneur, and social capital can be taken to be the resources, information and other advantages that the informal entrepreneur receives by virtue of trust, reciprocal exchanges, shared norms and social networks.
Social capital is the ability of actors to extract value from their social structures, networks, and memberships (Davidsson and Honig, 2003, p. 307). Broadly stated it is conceptualized as resources that exist in a relationship between social actors (Burt, 2000). Social capital is the benefit that groups or individuals receive from their ties with others (Portes 1998). Davidsson & Honig (2003) discuss how social networks supplement the effects of education, experience, and financial capital. It can be difficult to differentiate between an individual’s social capital and the social capital of the firm (Adler & Kwon, 2002). This thesis will consider both the social capital that the informal entrepreneur brings to the business and that developed by informal entrepreneurs during the entrepreneurial process of resource mobilization.

Social capital enables value and profit extraction. However, an effort at sociability is important for social capital’s production, with relationships being established and maintained through exchanges (Bourdieu, 2011). Social capital carries both opportunities and obligations that are mutually beneficial for establishments and the maintenance of relationships (Woolcock, 1998; Bourdieu, 2011). Social capital can be located at different levels, including the individual level (Lin, 1999), community level (Putnam, 2000), national level (Minkoff, 1997) and transnational level (Smith, 1998). Halpren (2005) describe these different scales and level of social capital as micro (individual), meso (community), and macro-societal levels.

Putnam’s analysis of social capital gained widespread recognition for its influence and relevance for entrepreneurship development (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). The entrepreneurial social capital approach has been developed by business network studies and social network studies (Hoang & Antoncic, 2003). Thus, both entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial firms can be critical in data analysis as their networks might overlap (Hite & Hesterly, 2001).

2.5.2 Social Capital Central Features

Social capital comprises the resources available to entrepreneurs as a result of their social networks, shared norms and values, and trust (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Uphoff, 2000). Similarly, Pretty and Ward (2011) have distinguished four central features of social capital: (a) relationships of trust; (b) reciprocity and exchanges; (c) common rules, norms and sanctions; and (d) connectedness, networks and groups.

2.5.2.1 Trust

Trust refers to the belief and confidence in other agents to behave as expected, regardless of uncertainties, risks and the possibility of them acting opportunistically (Lyon, 2000). Relationships such as friendships, trust and obligation are also important for business startups (Starr & MacMillan, 1990). Fukuyama (2001) specifies the radius of trust., i.e., the circle of people among whom co-operative
norms are operative (Bhagavatula, 2009). For social capital to have a positive influence, the radius of trust should be large (Bhagavatula, 2009). This trust can include sharing useful information, developing a close bond and goodwill with a particular contact, and participating in important economic transactions (Hite, 2005).

2.5.2.2 Exchange of Resources
Reciprocal exchange refers to informally enforced agreements to give goods, services, information, or money in exchange for future compensation. It involves personalized and long-term exchange relationships and proceeds according to unwritten but well-understood rules that specify the level and direction of the transfer of goods and services (Kranton, 1996). The content exchanged might be objective (information, goods, material, services) or subjective (trust, recognition, norms) (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990).

2.5.2.3 Shared Norms
Norms define what actions are considered acceptable or unacceptable, and include customs of co-operation, reciprocity, avoiding deception, keeping verbal contracts and deciding on acceptable sanctions (Lyon, 2000). Informal norms and rules are those that individuals use to shape their own everyday behavior (Pretty and Ward, 2001).

2.5.2.4 Networks
Finally, this research considers the dimension of the connections, interaction and co-operation within and between informal entrepreneurs. Social capital is a means of enabling participation in the network (Jack, Dodd, & Anderson, 2008) for further development of networks, once entrepreneurs start to take part in networking activities. Informal entrepreneurs in this study were interviewed about how their networks developed from startup until the present day in the process of resource accumulation for venture, i.e., the structure of social capital (Nahapiet & Goshal, 2000). Networks, especially informal sources, play an important role in new venture creation (Birley, 1985). Entrepreneurs are embedded in networks of social relations that continue to evolve (Zimmer & Aldrich, 1987). Entrepreneurship can be facilitated or constrained by linkages between resources and opportunities embedded in social networks (Zimmer, 1986; Zimmer & Aldrich, 1987). Successful business development is not possible solely via internal business resources. Therefore, networks are vital for a business’ survival and development (Lechner & Dowling, 2003). Entrepreneurs seek tangible and intangible resources through various social and business relations to facilitate new venture formation and development (Witt, 2004; Zimmer, 1986).

Networks are dynamic and can move from a state of active to latent networking (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). Networks develop from simple dyadic
stages to more multidimensional relations (Larson & Starr, 1993). Network changes usually occur because of changes in the resource requirements of the venture (Hite & Hesterley, 2001). Networks develop through trust, competences, adaptation, and interdependencies (Larson, 1992). Aldrich, Rosen and Woodward (1987) discuss variations in network relations according to business development stages. Entrepreneurs develop and maintain informal (e.g., kin-based) contacts for the survival and growth of networks (Aldrich et al., 1987; Ostgaard & Birley, 1996). Entrepreneurial networks become more strategic as businesses grow (Hite & Hesterley, 2001). Similarly, Butler and Hansen (1991) demonstrate that entrepreneurial networks develop from informal social networks in the startup phase to more strategic networks as the business grows.

2.5.3 Social Capital Classifications

Previous literature agrees that the social capital that an entrepreneur holds has an important influence on the entrepreneurial process and venture development. However, the patterns of the network that are most beneficial for entrepreneurs remain highly debated, i.e., bonding and bridging social capital (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). Networks are an important component of social capital. Davidsson and Honig (2003), using the concepts of weak and strong social ties, propound the importance of social capital.

2.5.3.1 Bonding Social Capital

Bonding social capital is “based on strong ties, such as having parents who owned businesses or close friends who owned businesses” while “bridging capital [is] based on weak ties” (Davidsson and Honig, 2003, p. 302). Some scholars agree that dense networks with strong ties are more likely to provide a smooth flow of information owing to trust from continuing relationships (Coleman, 1988). These resources are then transformed into opportunities (Uzzi, 1997). Closed networks are better for problem-solving and conflict resolution scenarios (Aldrich et al., 1997; Larson & Starr, 1993). Bonding social capital creates strong linkages of trust, as with family members or colleagues within a firm, which tend to be exclusive and bind members together.

2.5.3.2 Bridging and Linking Social Capital

However, some scholars argue that opportunities are not evenly distributed, and that this is also the case of resources. Therefore, sparse networks and weak ties are beneficial in tapping new information and opportunities (Granovetter, 1973; Burt 2000). As the business develops, strong ties and networks (bonding social capital, e.g., family, friends) continue to be important in providing encouragement and moral support but are less able to meet the entrepreneur’s need for increasingly specific commercial information. For these resource needs, an entrepreneur relies on weak ties (bridging social capital) to provide the
knowledge and access to resources that the business needs to develop. Bridging social capital focuses on social capital through tying a focal actor to external relations (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Bridging ties arise from loose or weak relationships that provide the entrepreneur with resources such as information, and typically occur in various network relationships. Granovetter (1973) argues that strong ties may lead to saturation in the community because of the ease of the information flow. Therefore, weak ties with structural holes are more beneficial for the integration of entrepreneurs in the community (Burt, 2000).

Linking social capital reflects the relationship of a community or group with groups of higher social order (Woolcock, 1998; Halpren, 2005). Linking social capital is the result of the weakest relationship but the most valuable outcome, as linking provides access and connection to power structures and institutions (Hawkings & Maurer, 2010). Unlike bonding, it is bridging and linking that is characterized by exposure to and the development of new ideas, values and perspectives (Woolcock, 1998; Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne & Solomo, 2007).

Nahapiet (2011) argues that both forms of social capital (bonding and bridging) have relative merits and both are important. It is crucial to find the right mix of relational (strong and weak ties) and structural (dense and sparse networks) embeddedness, depending on environmental and industrial conditions (Rowley et al., 2000).

2.5.4 Influences of Social Capital on Entrepreneurship

There is no consensus in the literature concerning the process through which social capital influences entrepreneurship. Indeed, perspectives are mixed regarding which kinds of ties are most beneficial for entrepreneurs. Weak ties are the acquaintances on whom little time and effort is spent, whereas strong ties demand more attention and time to maintain the status (Granovetter, 1973). Strong ties also have a high degree of redundancy, joint problem-solving and mutual trust to transfer resources (Granovetter, 1983; Uzzi, 1997).

Some scholars argue that weak ties are far better because they are the main means of transmitting new information between clusters of strong ties, and serve to bridge weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). Weak ties form a bridge to connect a set of one strong tie to another set of strong ties; otherwise, strong ties would be isolated (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). All weak ties do not become bridges, but all bridges are necessarily weak ties (Bhagavatula, 2009). Weak ties bring new kinds of information, and those with fewer weak ties are likely to be deprived of diverse information (Granovetter, 1973).

Other groups of scholars find strong ties beneficial for entrepreneurial survival. Faced with an uncertain situation, strong ties may come to distribute the workload to ensure survival (Uzzi, 1997). As the relationship grows stronger, maximum effort can be achieved with less effort because strong ties facilitate economies of time (Uzzi, 1999). Entrepreneurs develop and exploit strong strategic relationships to gain access to competitive advantages (Barney, 1991).
However, the demand for time and effort to maintain a strong tie is rather high in strong ties relative to weak ties (Granovetter, 1983). Social capital includes the benefits and drawbacks of strong and weak ties. Entrepreneurs need resource combinations for their ventures to survive. Aside from the financial, physical and human resources associated with strong ties, entrepreneurs require new and novel information (Kirzner, 1997; Baker and Nelson, 2005). This information is crucial in finding new ideas, exploring new opportunities, and identifying and utilizing new resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Weak ties provide diverse and new information, and strong ties provide redundant information (Granovetter, 1973) and tacit knowledge (Uzzi, 1997). Strong ties ensure trust, coordination, shared knowledge, joint problem-solving, time, and formal contracts (Uzzi, 1997; Larson 1992). Weak ties can be transformed into strong ties depending upon the frequency of contacts and sharing of trust among entities. On the same lines, Sutter et al. (2013) discuss network strength as being important for strategic resistance to illegitimate institutions. They also demonstrate that weak ties help entrepreneurs in moving their entire businesses to new locations to escape threats posed by local gangs, thus enhancing the entrepreneur's awareness and understanding of opportunities in other markets. However, when strong networks are dispersed rather than proximate, a less resistant strategic response was preferred (Sutter et al., 2013).

Therefore, there is a tension between creating the right mix and balance between strong and weak ties. This tension has been addressed by scholars but continues to require an answer to issues of social capital mobilization and informal entrepreneurship. Networks are essential for informal entrepreneurs’ survival, but the types of networks that tend to be preferred and how they form requires further empirical evidence.

2.6 Human Capital Mobilization

The importance of networks for the success of ventures is evident. Nevertheless, good networks alone cannot ensure a venture’s success. Entrepreneurs possess different information and diverse backgrounds, and so they develop diverse networks (Shane, 2000). Jones et al. (2010) explain that entrepreneurs use their existing human capital to create an environment in which the firm can access and use networks. In return, the use of human capital is reliant on the existence of a social structure and the use of social capital (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). Entrepreneurs use a combination of social and human capital to be fully effective (Mosey and Wright, 2007). Yu (2001) argues that it is not the knowledge of the entrepreneur him- or herself that is important in identifying opportunities, but rather the utilization of this knowledge. Similarly, Shaver and Scott (1991) found that searching and processing information leads to opportunity recognition. This knowledge corridor (Venkataraman, 1997) of entrepreneurs is contingent on
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their generic and specific human capital (Becker, 1991), resulting in different knowledge corridors.

2.6.1 Human Capital

In general, “human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways” (Coleman, 1998, p. 100). Human capital (knowledge) is created when individuals anticipate, create, and access exchanges (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 2000). Entrepreneurs develop different networks due to their diverse knowledge and backgrounds (Shane, 2000). In return, the use of human capital relies on the existence of social structures and social networks (Davidsson & Honig, 2003), i.e., networks provide or limit the resources required by entrepreneurs.

2.6.2 Human Capital Central Feature

2.6.2.1 Knowledge and Information Search

Previous findings within the broader entrepreneurship and resource mobilization literature suggest that entrepreneurial prior knowledge influences the ways in which firms judge opportunities and act and make resource mobilization decisions that can shape opportunities (Sonenshein, 2014). From the perspective of an entrepreneur who creates novel combinations and repurposes resources and can spot potential resources and convert them to a resource in use, Fiet et al. (2013) posited information-seeking behavior as a central tenet of the entrepreneurial process. Information-seeking may pose a useful dimension of human capital for understanding why some entrepreneurs are better at dealing with constrained situations than others. However, having more information provides no guarantee that entrepreneurs will be successful in resource mobilization. Perceiving potential resources is one part and grasping and bringing resources in use through giving new uses, repurposing and redefining is also crucial for the successful establishment of ventures (Feldman, 2001, 2004; Feldman et al., 2011).

Lévi-Strauss (1966) suggests that all objects have potential value and that their value is often revealed in combination, i.e., a potential resource and resource in use (Feldman, 2004; Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010). How entrepreneurs value resources are critical as it shapes and converts potential resources into resources in use. Such entrepreneurial thinking allows the firm to manage uncertainty and resources with the help of others and ultimately grow, while accepting some level of risk (Muller, 2013). Central here is the fact that the resources in question are often seen and used differently from how they were originally intended (Baker & Nelson, 2005), meaning that resources become repurposed or upcycled (Muller,
2013; Gaddefors & Anderson, 2009) and appear in new combinations. An implication of this is the possibility of constructing new products and solutions, (Lanzara, 1999).

In stable environments, careful analysis and planning followed by massive investment are believed to lead to greater market share and eventual returns (Kulatilaka & Perotti, 1998). These large-scale commitments are often intended to block competitors, reduce risk and develop quick profits or greater cash flow, upon which managers are often evaluated. However, in more uncertain environments where markets are rapidly changing, extensive planning and significant investments in single projects can have adverse performance implications (Eisenhardt & Brown, 1998; McGrath & MacMillan, 2000). This contingency view towards resources suggests that in more dynamic environments, firms need entrepreneurial thinking that provides flexibility to change course when necessary, pursue multiple high-variance opportunities, and minimize exposure at any one stage of a project by investing in a multi-step manner at little cost (McGrath & MacMillan, 2000).

Resource mobilization concerns ways in which entrepreneurs develop personal knowledge of potential uses of resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010; Lévi-Strauss, 1966). Baker and Nelson (2005) have suggested that an entrepreneur’s knowledge of resources is as important as identifying opportunities, and that this is crucial in embracing new opportunities and problems. Such entrepreneurial human capital is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs access resources (Baker et al., 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (e.g., Salunke et al., 2011), and shape social meanings in contextual settings (e.g., Mair & Marti, 2009).

Entrepreneurs search for information by scanning the environment (Fiet, 2007). Information seeking is a process in which an individual goes about looking for information, i.e., information signals. It is a complementary process to the information need. It is a process that requires an information seeker to apply personal knowledge and skills, or what might be called “personal information infrastructures,” such as a person’s cognitive abilities and his or her knowledge skills about the problem (Marchionini 1997).

To perform an entrepreneurial search for a resource, Sarasvathy and Dew (2013, p. 289) clarify that “entrepreneurs do not necessarily begin with an opportunity or market research. Instead, they start with who they are, what they know and whom they know. These are their primary means. What they have – i.e., capital asset is a function of their identity, knowledge, and networks.” Thus, an entrepreneur’s search for resources starts with seeking information, depending upon the resource (prior knowledge, experience, and existing resources) and external resources (networks). People may use their prior knowledge and experience to assess how many resources they need and how they should utilize them (Feldman, 2001, 2004; Feldman et al., 2011). Ardichvili et al. (2003) discuss two types of searches that entrepreneurs can perform to find opportunities, termed active and passive search. Active search means that entrepreneurs are more sensitive to the environment and scan the
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environment based on their experience and prior knowledge, while passive search refers to less sensitivity to environmental scanning and is much more reliant on networks; in the latter case, entrepreneurs are also receptive rather than proactive (Ardichvili et al., 2003). In passive search, alertness is not inherent as in the case of Kirzner’s (1997) standard view of alertness, but entrepreneurs are open to environmental changes and are sensitive to disruptions in the market, even if they do not search actively (DeTienne & Chandler, 2004). Relying on this view, I assume that both active and passive information search affects resource mobilization among entrepreneurs.

2.6.3 Human Capital Classifications

Human capital contains both generic and specific elements (Becker, 1991). Generic elements of human capital include education, communication, and family background for general economic activity (Cooper et al., 1994). Honig (1998) discusses the concept of entrepreneur-specific human capital, i.e., the ability to seek and filter information into the potential search for resources and opportunities. Specific human capital could constitute entrepreneurship-specific human capital and venture-specific human capital. Generic and specific elements of human capital, such as education, family background, information seeking, and experience, all make a difference.

2.6.3.1 Generic Human Capital

Entrepreneurs’ human capital includes generic and specific human capital (Becker, 1991). Generic elements of human capital include education, communication, family background, and technical know-how for general economic activity (Cooper et al., 1994). Entrepreneur-specific human capital is the ability to seek and filter information into a potential search for resources (Honig, 1998). Generic human capital may provide access to general networks and increase the problem-solving ability of the entrepreneur (Cooper et al., 1994).

Education is usually seen as an essential component of human capital, providing technical know-how, formal skills, self-confidence, and problem-solving skills (Cooper et al., 1994). Indeed, higher education increases the survival and growth potential for businesses (Cooper et al., 1994). Entrepreneurs with a higher college degree display significantly fewer attempts at failing than those with lower educational levels (Bates, 1985). However, Gimeno et al. (1997) have reported that some entrepreneurs without a high level of education can also perform more effectively in their businesses. Similarly, Davidsson and Honig (2003) found that a high level of education was not the significant factor for business success and a profitable venture. High education infers high social status and an impression of innate productivity (Ucbasaran et al., 2008), which can be extremely helpful in creating good repute among clients, suppliers and investors. Bates (1985) found that entrepreneurs with higher education were able to easily
secure loans from banks. Chandler and Hanks (1998) found that entrepreneurs with significant human capital required less financial capital in comparison to those with lower levels of human capital. Previous studies have revealed that education and business performance are not directly related but improve the overall business performance and resource accessibility of entrepreneurs. However, we still do not know whether education has any impact on the resource mobilization activities of informal entrepreneurs.

Human capital studies identify the link between entrepreneur human capital and family background (e.g. Davidsson and Honig, 2003). Aldrich and Kim (2007) argue that the skills acquired by entrepreneurs can be heavily influenced by adults, and parents in particular. Aldrich and Kim (2007) also reported that there is little evidence if parents provide financial capital to their children for business startups. According to the existing literature, the most precise advantage that can be transferred from parents to their children may be career choice, i.e., entrepreneurial parents are more likely to have entrepreneurial children (e.g. Blanchflower & Oswald, 1998; Clark, Berkeley & Steuer, 2001; Kirkwood, 2007).

Communication skills such as languages spoken form the third component of generic human capital. Indeed, the number of languages spoken may improve entrepreneurial performance (Bhagavatula et al., 2010). Bhagavatula et al. (2010) found that entrepreneurs who speak more languages in India were able to tap new networks in different locations. More languages in different Indian regions allowed entrepreneurs to identify different resources with the development of weak ties in new geographical regions (Bhagavatula et al., 2010).

The qualitative cases in this thesis enable analysis of the subjective opinions of informal entrepreneurs regarding which aspects of generic human capital (i.e., education, communication and family background), if any, have contributed to their resource mobilization activities of resource identification, resource gathering and resource utilization.

2.6.3.2 Entrepreneurship and Venture-Specific Human Capital

Entrepreneur-specific human capital includes the entrepreneurial capability to recognize and exploit opportunities, family businesses or business ownership (Ucbasaran et al., 2006). Entrepreneurship-specific training and experience has limited applicability to other occupations (Gimeno et al., 1997). Ventures with teams that have previous startup or business experience are more likely to survive (Delmar and Shane, 2006). Venture-specific human capital is “an entrepreneur’s knowledge of the venture domain relating to customers, suppliers, products, and services” (Ucbasaran et al., 2006, p. 29). Industry-specific knowledge is significant for business survival and growth (Cooper et al., 1994). The experience and contacts developed in a similar business sector may reduce the liability of newness of a new venture (Cooper et al., 1994). This distinction between entrepreneurship- and venture-specific human capital is based on knowledge relevance. In entrepreneurship-specific human capital, knowledge is related to business startup
and market knowledge, but in venture-specific human capital, knowledge is related to a specific sector in which the business commences operations.

2.6.4 Influences of Human Capital on Entrepreneurship

An entrepreneur’s human capital positively influences the entrepreneurial process (Bates, 1990, Cooper et al., 1994, Honig, 1998; Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Dimov and Shepard, 2005; Delmar and Shane, 2006; Lee and Jones, 2008). For example, entrepreneurs with considerable human capital require less financial capital than those with lower human capital (Chandler & Hanks, 1998). Lee and Jones (2008) studied two nascent entrepreneurs’ groups, one with a formal university education and the other with minimal formal education. The two gained similar benefits from bonding social capital, but when it came to bridging social capital, the group with less formal education found it difficult to develop bridging social capital using electronic communication. Similarly, Gimeno et al. (1997) argue that the role of the entrepreneur, particularly in decision-making, knowledge and skills in building social contacts, cannot be ignored. Mosey and Wright (2007) argue that less experienced entrepreneurs lack knowledge in an industry and networks and therefore they operate in a weaker position to access resources and identify opportunities. Shaver and Scott (1991) discuss that people discover opportunities due to their superior information-processing ability and search techniques. Bates (1990) has demonstrated that entrepreneurs with higher education were able to secure loans from commercial banks more easily. Entrepreneurs with greater experience in the industry are more likely to survive in business (Delmar & Shane, 2006), and are superior at processing information and evaluating opportunities (Baron & Ensley, 2006).

2.7 Concluding Remarks

Resource mobilization can have significant but different impacts on firms (Kodithuwakku & Rosa, 2002). This chapter has demonstrated that firms mobilize resources for many reasons, ranging from financial stability to becoming operational, from design to product development, and from survival to success. Each resource mobilizing activity assumes different means of pursuing and identifying opportunities and resource accumulation in different contexts. Entrepreneurs and managers in small businesses tend to work with fewer resources and pursue opportunities using their limited resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Some entrepreneurs show that they can creatively repurpose or recombine existing resources and put them to novel use (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Kirzner, 2009). Opportunities can be shaped or reshaped by an entrepreneur’s resources, or resources can shape or limit opportunities. Through their resource mobilization activities, entrepreneurs rely on their social and human capital.
However, our understanding of resource mobilization in terms of informal entrepreneurs remains superficial. This research is particularly interested in the question of how resource mobilization activities among informal entrepreneurs are influenced by social and human capital. To answer this question appropriately, this chapter has set the theoretical basis of social and human capital theory of entrepreneurship and resource mobilization theory. It is next important to understand informal entrepreneurship and the kinds of issues discussed in the current literature of informal entrepreneurship.
3. Informal Entrepreneurship

This chapter reviews informal entrepreneurship and its links to the informal sector and urbanization. The chapter then explores specific discussions regarding the historical development of mainstream debates addressing the informal sector and how the literature approaches different categories of informal work activities. Having clarified the conceptual themes, the chapter extends to the main themes and findings of this body of literature. Research gaps are also discussed. Concluding remarks briefly summarize the key points regarding informal entrepreneurship.

3.1 Background: Urbanization and Informal Activity

Urbanization is a process that converts rural land into urban uses, and affects the structures, functions, dynamics and livelihoods of populations living in cities (Osborne, 2005). Rapid urbanization is ongoing all over the world, but especially in developing nations (Thapa & Murayama, 2010). The urban population is expected to continue to grow (see Figure 1), such that by 2050 the world will be one-third rural (34 percent) and two-thirds urban (66 percent), roughly the reverse of the global rural-urban population distribution of the mid-twentieth century (United Nations, 2014).

Figure 1: Rate of Urbanization Globally (Rural-Urban Population Divide) (United Nations, 2014)
This rapid urbanization demands new development plans and policies (Abdullah & Nakagoshi, 2006; Seto & Kaufmann, 2003). The persistent use of infrastructure, housing and environmental resources requires serious and consistent attention when monitoring urban regions (Miller & Small, 2003; Thapa & Murayama, 2010). The resources possessed by any nation are critical when planning for areas, as the pace of urbanization differs by country. Under central planning, lack of resources and shortages lead to informal sector that operates parallel to formal sector (Dana 2013a, 2013b).

Increased urbanization together with the slow expansion of employment in the formal sector has forced the largest share of the workforce into the informal economy (Lyons & Snoxell, 2005). Cognizant of the issue of informality, policymakers and development agents have since the 1960s come to recognize the persistence of income distribution, inequality, and unemployment as major challenges related to urbanization in emerging economies (Bosch & Maloney, 2008). In response, the International Labor Organization (ILO) initiated a study on informal employment by organizing and allocating multi-disciplinary employment missions to different countries of the world, of which Kenya was the first (Chen, 2008). The ILO’s World Employment Program (Seers 1970) and the catchphrases of the 1970s development discourse (growth with redistribution; basic needs; appropriate technology; community participation; small is beautiful; the New International Economic Order) are reflective of its prominence (Bromley, 1978, 2014). The first ILO mission to Kenya recognized that the informal economy has not only persisted but also expanded in emerging economies. Since then, the sector has continued to display a significant increase and expansion in emerging economies. This stood squarely in the face of the much larger recognition in the mid-1970s that modernization, industrialization and labor markets might have substantially different patterns around the world, and that societal change did not necessarily follow a single path (Davis, 2016; Soja, 2009).

3.1.1 Definitions

The informal sector refers to “production and employment in unregistered enterprises” (Meagher, 2013, p. 2).

Informal employment “focuses on employment outside of the labor protection regulations of a given society, whether in formal or informal firms” (Meagher, 2013, p. 2).

Informal enterprise “is the private unit not registered with the authorities and no complete set of formal accounts kept” (Hussmann, 2005, 3).

1 Details of approaches to informal work classification can be found in Section 3.3
The informal economy “covers all firms, workers, and activities that operate outside the legal, regulatory framework of society, and the output that they generate” (Meagher, 2013, p. 2).

3.2 Approaches to Map Informal Work Activities

Webb et al. (2009) have distinguished between formal, informal and illegal economies. They argue that legality and legitimacy set the boundaries between what is formal, informal or illegal. Formal is always about using legal and legitimate means to produce legal and legitimate ends. In contrast, the illegal (or what Webb et al. term ‘renegade’) economy exploits illegal and illegitimate means and ends, such as bank robberies and drug cartels. Given that the focus of this dissertation is on the informal sector rather than the criminal or formal sector, I will only discuss the classification of work activity in this sector. The informal sector is part of the informal economy. It couple’s illegality with illegitimacy and contains activities beyond formal institutions, albeit within informal boundaries (Webb et al., 2009). The informal sector can be present in rural areas, but it is mostly associated with urbanization and therefore is widely referred to as an urban informal sector. Existing literature on the informal sector describes different types of informal work activities.

In order to map informal sector activities beyond those based on job and monetary status (salaries and wages), Williams, Round and Rodgers, (2009) have offered an advanced visualization. Building on the concept of the total social organization of Labor (TSOL) (Glucksmann, 2005; Taylor, 2004), they describe the manner in which labor in a society is distributed. Figure 2 displays this categorization in terms of paid/unpaid work and within the formal/informal sector. Three categories (2, 4, and 8) refer to informal paid work. This type of categorization was made by ILO (1993) in dividing all employment into six groups and distinguishing between paid and self-employment. Paid informal work categories (2, 4 and 8) in the grid can also be seen as paid employment (4 and 8) and paid self-employment (2) (Williams et al., 2009).
For this dissertation, Category 2, i.e., Paid self-employment (Williams et al., 2009) or own account workers in informal enterprises (3) (Hussmanns, 2005) (informal sector entrepreneurship) will be used and discussed. However, it might be possible that other types of work (formal/informal, paid/unpaid) can affect informal sector entrepreneurship. If this were to prove the case, other kinds of work activities will be discussed regarding informal entrepreneurship.

There is significant agreement in the literature that informal sector work activities are situated along a continuum rather than being mutually exclusive spheres (De Castro, Khavul, & Bruton, 2014; Welter et al., 2015; Williams & Shahid, 2014). This degree of (in)formalization could be the result of different institutional contexts (Williams & Shahid, 2014). It is not the case among informal entrepreneurs that they are wholly informal or formal (De Castro et al., 2014), but rather they have a degree of (in)formalization because of formal-informal linkages (Meagher, 2013). For example, these degrees could be formal, semi-formal or informal, as noted by Williams and Shahid (2014).

### 3.3 Mainstream Debates in Informal Entrepreneurship

As is apparent from the approaches to understanding informal work, informal activity involves different definitions. These various definitions originate from particular discussions and discourses on informal entrepreneurship (Moser,
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1978). Therefore, a review of mainstream debates providing primary insights regarding informal entrepreneurship is necessary.

3.3.1 Dualism Debate

Dualism is the mainstream debate emphasizing dualities within urban economies and societies. The assumption in dualism is that the informal sector is a leftover of earlier production and consumption. Thus, it is not here to stay, and will eventually disappear. This debate concerning the informal sector corresponds with Derrida’s (1967) hierarchal relationships in which one element is superordinate, and the other is subordinate (Potts, 2000). Informality is marginal and subordinate as a result of a modern and dynamic society in the dualism debate, while the formal economy is superordinate, positive and connected with progress (Williams & Round, 2007). The central expectation in dualism is that modernization and industrialization will pull workers in developing countries from the unproductive informal sector towards a modern industrial formal sector (Moser, 1978; Potts, 2000). However, research has demonstrated that the formal economy was unable to absorb the large pool of unemployed, and the informal sector continued to survive and even grow around the globe (Chen, 2008). Dualist scholars disagree on how best to define and understand the informal sector. For example, some see two separate categories of traditional and modern activities, while others think that the disconnection between the modern and traditional and the urban and rural is misleading (Potts, 2000). Nevertheless, there is an agreement that if relevant policy measures and regulations become applied to removing constraints to informal entrepreneurs, then informal entrepreneurship can result in capital accumulation.

3.3.1.1 Hart’s Dualism and Formal-Informal Linkages: Individuals, Activities, and Enterprises

Dualist theorization is largely connected to Kenneth Hart’s research on labor markets in Ghana. Indeed, he discussed linkages between the formal and informal sector, which can be developed and established through relevant policies (Hart, 1973). Hart altered the traditional negative perception of the informal sector by highlighting its income-generating activities and capital accumulation, and thus it may be considered positive and productive (Livingstone, 1991). The focus on Hart’s dualism was to identify contributions from the informal sector and the income-generating capacities of the urban poor (Hart, 1973). He demonstrated how city life is dependent on informal urban workers and the presence of self-employed activities ranging from trivial activities to entrepreneurial businesses (Hart, 1973). Hart’s findings prompted new empirical research and methods to map informal activities. Nevertheless, Hart also included criminal activities, and this created confusion regarding the extent to which the informal is positive in its value creation (Moser, 1978).
3.3.1.2 International Labor Organization (ILO) and Dualism

The ILO contributed to the dualism debate and particularly to Hart’s work by narrowing down the scope of the informal sector (Sethuraman, 1976). It described the informal sector as economically efficient and in terms of self-employment rather than working poor (Sethuraman, 1976). The informal sector is seen as providing natural space to enter into employment outside of the formal system. The report focused on two major employment problems: frustrated job-seekers unable to find work commensurate with their skills and training; the underutilization of labor resources at the national level. Hart’s claim of capital accumulation and income opportunities present within the informal sector were also emphasized by the ILO’s Kenyan report (Potts, 2000).

Informal economic activity on a small scale can considerably influence the structure of the economy and aid in the process of expanding the range of income-producing activities required for a rapidly growing population. The ILO framework reflects the dualist focus on enterprises, rather than individuals, activities, and enterprises as in Hart’s typology.

3.3.2 Structuralist Debate: Enterprise Focus

The structuralist school views the informal economy as micro-enterprises and workers that work in the informal sector to reduce input and labor costs, and thereby increase the competitiveness of major capitalist firms (Castells & Portes, 1989; Moser, 1978). Following the ILO reports, the enterprise focus (small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs) was highlighted in the informal entrepreneurship literature. Sethuraman (1976) distinguished between formal and informal enterprises through their approaches and motives, i.e., formal are created for profit maximization while informal are for employment creation. Five sectors (manufacturing, construction, transport, trade, and services) were categorized to include informal enterprises. Sethuraman (1976) proposed that informal enterprises can be described by at least one of the following criteria: employs less than 10 persons; operates on an illegal basis; employs members of the household; does not observe fixed hours/days of operation; works in semi-permanent or temporary premises, or in a shifting location; does not use any electricity in the manufacturing process; does not depend on formal financial institutions for its credit needs; output normally distributed directly to the final consumer; and almost all those working in it have fewer than six years of formal education (Sethuraman, 1976). Legal enterprises and informal enterprises comprising two distinct sectors with weak linkages (input and output exchange between two sectors) between them were also discussed. The main research issue advanced in this debate was to investigate the effectiveness of forward and backward linkages between formal and informal enterprises.
3.3.2.1 **Structuralist Debate: Labor Market Focus**

Other mainstream structuralists defined the informal sector in non-enterprise terms, with analytical focus placed on the political economy of labor markets (Mazumdar, 1976). Structural factors that affect informal income opportunities include market forces, public policies, regulations such as loans, investment incentives, licensing requirements and wage regulations. These structural factors work together as enablers or barriers to mobility within the formal or informal sector. Mazumdar (1976) considers informal labor unprotected while the formal sector labor protected labor owing to regulations for the latter. Weeks (1975) argues that the informal sector has greater potential to serve the urban economy as it relies on local resources and entrepreneurial skills rather than imports as is the case of the formal sector. Thus, the right mixture of policies can help informal sector enterprises grow and develop and may even boost the urban economy. Linkages with formal sector enterprises should be developed to effectively address problems in the informal sector.

3.3.3 **Legalist and Voluntarist Debate: Entrepreneurialism Focus**

Legalist and voluntarists’ debates highlight the informal economy as an alternative to the formal sector, as advocated on the most part by neoliberals (Bosch & Maloney, 2008; De Soto, 2000; Maloney, 2004). The legalist view concerns deregulation and the liberation of the labor market from oppression. Legalists view informal entrepreneurship as a dysfunctional problem that is driven by necessity and needs fixing through development planning, i.e., bureaucratic/Newtonian theory of informal sector development and planning as identified by Salahdine (1991). Legalist scholars argue that overregulation and bureaucracy can be negative, and the real core of the problem lies in liberating the labor market from excessive intervention, whilst introducing deregulations. Legalism has constituted the basis of a new neoliberal reading of informal sector dynamics. Legalists focus on simplified bureaucratic procedures, viewing the real problem as too much formality (De Soto, 2000). They argue that informal enterprises should be encouraged to explore productive outputs and the potential of informal enterprises.

In this approach, the voluntary informal self-employment is also discussed. These are mostly micro-entrepreneurs that prefer informality due to costs and time- and effort-consuming registration (Williams & Round, 2008; Williams et al., 2009). Cross and Johnson (2000) claim that the informal sector is the best parallel to the formal sector as it absorbs unemployment and provides social and economic effects. Viewing the informal sector as a negative phenomenon is not advised and is in fact entirely mistaken. The regulations and policies of the informal sector should be relevant and address its peculiarities. For example, the
unofficial and unregistered status of microenterprises can protect their capital (Cross & Johnson, 2000) and encourage economic activity.

Voluntarists criticize dualism and disregard the necessity and marginal view of informal entrepreneurship, claiming that informal entrepreneurship is mainly about self-employment and flexibility, autonomy, creativity, comfort, prestige, and dignity (Bosch & Maloney, 2008; Maloney, 2004). Maloney (2004) proposes that it is not dualism that causes informality but self-employment that causes dualism, generating different degrees of linkages between a formal and informal sector (De Castro et al., 2014). Contemporary scholars on informal entrepreneurship support this alternative voluntarist view, e.g. Williams et al. (2009). Indeed, these authors found that that informal self-employed can be divided into three groups: those who voluntarily exit the formal sector (57 percent of all self-employed), those who are excluded from the formal sector (20 percent), and those who have both exit and exclusion reasons for being informal (23 percent). Who then are those self-employed exiting the formal economy and most likely to fit the alternative theory? They are mostly the higher-income, informal self-employed, driven by extra earning opportunities from their regular jobs, such as plumbers, electricians, builders and even lawyers whose motive is just to ‘top up’ their formal incomes. The other major rationale for performing informal work is to avoid informal taxation and administrative corruption typical in Pakistan. In this case, entrepreneurs positively perceive informality due to their belief that the officials are stealing the taxes they pay.

3.4 Motives: Why Participate in Informal Entrepreneurial Activity?

3.4.1 Motives of Entrepreneurs

To correctly assess the motives of entrepreneurs in the informal entrepreneurship literature, scholars (Adom & Williams, 2012; Williams & Nadin, 2010a) state that we need to think about informal entrepreneurship as a hidden enterprise culture including both necessity and opportunity that drives entrepreneurship. Traditionally, informal entrepreneurship was thought to comprise people who were marginalized from the formal sector and joined the informal sector out of necessity. However now scholars (e.g., Smallbone, North, & Kalantaridis, 1999; Smallbone & Welter, 2001; Welter et al., 2015) argue that entrepreneurs participate in informal entrepreneurial activity because they find greater autonomy, flexibility and freedom here. Lozano (1989) notes that there can be both involuntary and voluntary entrepreneurs in the informal sector. Similarly, Williams et al. (2009) suggest that informal entrepreneurship includes both necessity and opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, and so we need to think beyond the marginalization thesis (Williams, 2007). In short, informal
entrepreneurship can be a product of both exclusion and exit from the formal economy, depending upon the exploitative system or personal rational economic decision, respectively (Williams & Youssef, 2013).

However, these motives display temporal fluidity as they can change over time, especially in the case of necessity entrepreneurs (Adom & Williams, 2012; Williams et al., 2009). Necessity entrepreneurs can be opportunity-driven entrepreneurs or willing entrepreneurs when they survive the constraints and their businesses become established (Snyder, 2004). Aside from this, there can be social reasons to join informal entrepreneurship, such as helping other poor people (Hytti, Gordin, & Dedova, 2015). Abetti (2004) found that entrepreneurs can be motivated to participate in the informal sector to recognize their entrepreneurial spirits, viewing overemphasized bureaucratic set-ups as restrictive to their creativity and potential success. Informal entrepreneurship can also be a means of self-identification and gaining a certain status in a particular group and society (Hytti et al., 2015).

The main influencing factors in both western and non-western economies that motivate entrepreneurs to join the informal sector can be divided into personal, structural and institutional factors (Williams & Shahid, 2014). At the personal level, Williams and Shahid (2014) identify age, income, education and skill level, gender, the age of business and exclusion from the formal sector as the main influencing factors. At the institutional level, public sector corruption, tax rates, the risk of detection and punishments represent the main factors that can push entrepreneurs into the informal sector. Institutional trust is a very significant influencing factor, and if trust in institutions is lacking among the public, it can force entrepreneurs into the informal sector (Adriaenssens & Hendrickx, 2015). Structural-level factors that can motivate participation in informal entrepreneurial activity include the sectoral composition of economies, barriers to registration, awareness of regulations, tax morality and resistance towards the government. Giugale et al. (2000) discuss how price competition in the market can also lock small firms in informal entrepreneurship.

### 3.4.2 Motives of Consumers

Participating in informal entrepreneurial activity is not a one-sided phenomenon, i.e., from the entrepreneur’s perspective alone. Indeed, other stakeholders such as customers are equally willing to take part in purchases in the informal sector. Informal entrepreneurship cannot exist without tolerance or legitimacy in local ecosystems (De Castro et al., 2014). Scholars assume that enterprises in the informal sector are a source of contributions to alleviate poverty and can create transactional linkages between formal and unofficial markets (Godfrey, 2011; Kistruck et al., 2011; Webb, Kistruck, Ireland, & Ketchen Jr, 2010). However, if formal institutions are stable, informal transactions will be lower and vice versa (London, Esper, Grogan-Kaylor, & Kistruck, 2014).
Consumers purchase goods and services in the informal sector for different reasons, including low prices, social redistributive explanation or failures in the formal economy (Williams & Martinez-Perez, 2014). Financial gains and low costs form the dominant reason for informal transactions or consumers preferring purchases in the informal sector (Davis, 2016). For example, Esper, London, and Kanchwala (2013) discuss how low-cost sanitation services to people living in urban slums of Kenya by the informal enterprise Sanergy contributes to life quality by providing clean toilets at affordable prices. The social redistributive rationale can be a form of paid favors or help an unemployed or street vendor without representing a form of charity that the recipient might refuse (Williams & Martinez-Perez, 2014). Consumers most likely prefer informal sector products in the absence of a formal market (Maloney, 2004) or because of the lack of availability of a faster and high-quality formal service (Williams & Martinez-Perez, 2014). Individual and network norms push consumer behaviors to positively respond to the informal transaction when the regulatory environment is weak or absent (London et al., 2014).

3.5 Resource Mobilization Activities of Informal Entrepreneurs

The informal entrepreneurship literature predominantly focuses on resource constraints within which informal entrepreneurs operate. Informal entrepreneurs are part of local ecosystems, and they purposefully navigate between enabling and constraining powers and contexts (De Castro et al., 2014) through the use of different tactics (Hjorth, 2004). Lee and Hung (2014) identified tactics of framing, aggregating and bridging used by Chinese entrepreneurs to spur collective actions to contest the state. These three tactics of framing, aggregating and bridging are used to mobilize resources and pursue the transition to the formal economy by Chinese entrepreneurs in the mobile phone industry. Tactics to mobilize resources, both legal and illegal, are accepted in the society if they are considered legitimate in the sense that they are undertaken by a large proportion of the community. In spite of the violation of taxes or license regulations, informal entrepreneurs of Shan-Zhai survived because of the legitimacy granted to them through Base of Pyramid (BoP). Nevertheless, this legitimacy has certain limits within the operating space bordered by informal and formal institutions (Castells & Portes, 1989). For example, gangs are illegitimate as they do not represent societal norms (Sutter et al., 2013). Informal entrepreneurs respond tactically to illegal institutional pressures such as organized crime by defying, avoiding or adhering to the pressures (Castells & Portes, 1989). These tactical responses of informal entrepreneurs are contingent on their resource and network strength; more network power leads to defiance and vice versa. Social relations and social trust have a positive effect on informal exchanges.
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(Adriaenssens & Hendrickx, 2015), while social trust can be increased with a lack of confidence in institutions (Freitag, 2003). Informal entrepreneurs respond tactically by finding gaps between formal and informal institutions, and are more alert to incongruities (Webb et al., 2009). Webb et al. (2009) give the example of the lobby that is trying to legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes. Thus, entrepreneurial resource mobilization, especially legitimacy within a certain context for informal entrepreneurs, seems to be quite crucial in shaping opportunities. These informal entrepreneurs negotiate between multiple constraints to meet the expectations of various audiences at the macro and micro level (De Castro, Balkin, & Shepherd, 2008; De Castro et al., 2014). Informal entrepreneurs tend to be more active in resource mobilization in the presence of resource-related constraints and governmental inefficiencies. They can combine their knowledge and networks to survive the constraints and to cut down costs and taxation (Welter et al., 2015).

3.5.1 Human Capital and Resource Mobilization of Informal Entrepreneurs

Previous research suggests that urban areas support entrepreneurial activities by providing more (accessible) local entrepreneurial opportunities and resources than rural areas (Armington & Acs, 2002; Bosma, van Stel & Suddle, 2008; Reynolds, Storey & Weasthead, 1994; Stam, 2007, 2010). However, competition, entry barriers and less innovation differentiation can undermine entrepreneurial activity (Naudé et al., 2008), resulting in informal business.

The existing literature suggests that well-educated labor supports local entrepreneurship owing to high levels of creativity and innovation through a more secure social network (Davelaar & Nijkamp, 1997; Maillat, 1995; Ritsila, 1999; Tödtling & Wanzenböck, 2003). This positive influence of education on local entrepreneurial activity has been suggested by different scholars (Lundstrom & Stevenson, 2006; Naudé et al., 2008). Education provides positive support for entrepreneurial activity through enhanced entrepreneurial opportunities at exploitation and knowledge.

Financial access represents another relevant factor. For example, Bergmann (2005) suggests that increased spending capacity promotes entrepreneurship. Capital resources and low borrowing costs (Naudé et al., 2008; Stam, 2010) are also helpful in promoting formal entrepreneurial activity in any region and vice versa.

Paid employment and high wage levels increase the attractiveness of employment in a particular area (Nyström, 2005). Any region with few jobs exhibits higher trends towards entrepreneurship, in terms of both formal and informal entrepreneurial activities (Audretsch & Fritsch, 1994). Nevertheless, higher unemployment also sheds light on a weak institutional condition within an uncertain economic situation (Carree, Van Stel, Thurik, & Wennekers, 2002;
Reynolds et al., 1994). Institutions like local governments and their policies affect entrepreneurial activities directly (Acs & Stough, 2008; Keeble & Walker, 1994).

### 3.5.2 Social Capital and Resource Mobilization of Informal Entrepreneurs

Apart from formal institutions, scholars have also discussed informal systems such as culture as an influential indicator that can determine informal entrepreneurial activity (Bosma & Schutjens, 2011). Culture impacts preferences, perceptions, legitimacy, and the acceptance of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities (Freytag & Thurik, 2010; Gibson & Kong, 2005; Lafuente, Vaillant, & Rialp, 2007; Vaillant & Lafuente, 2007). A rich context of local tradition and social ties substitute for a lack of formal governance mechanisms and influence economic transitions (Mair, Marti & Ventresca, 2012). The high density of small businesses in a region opens up new entrepreneurial opportunities and aspirations, and fosters an acceptance of entrepreneurial activity (Kangasharju, 2000; Rotefoss & Kolvereid, 2005). Informal social ties additionally influence the entrepreneurial decision-making process in the early phases, especially decisions related to starting a business (Mueller, 2006). How entrepreneurial success and failure is valued in a certain context is also crucial. Vaillant and Lafuente (2007) discuss how a culture that stigmatizes entrepreneurial failure can be an obstacle to entrepreneurial activity. On the other hand, encouragement for business startups not only increases the number of startups but eventually results in knowledge spillovers and greater innovation and diversity (Audretsch, Bönte, & Keilbach, 2008; Fritsch & Mueller, 2007, 2008; Ritsila, 1999).

The importance of social capital influences is critical to a firm’s formation. For example, previous studies have shown that entrepreneurs establish their businesses near to places where they live as they are aware of people, networks, culture, values and norms (Cooper & Folta, 2000; Sorenson & Audia, 2000; Stam, 2007, 2010). Moreover, the home region tends to be preferred because of personal networks and familiarity with markets. Being close to the home area is also essential for entrepreneurial emotional stability (Dahl & Sorenson, 2009), especially given limited financial resources (Stam, 2007, 2010). Furthermore, it provides social facts and knowledge through personal contacts (Asheim & Isaksen, 2002), and makes firms competitive through opportunity exploitation (Michelacci & Silva, 2007).
3.6 Suggested Strategies by Researchers for Effective Resource Mobilization

The actions of informal entrepreneurs to mobilize resources can help them run their small enterprises in the informal sector in the short term, but unless there are significant changes in government regulations and policy initiatives, the informal sector will continue to remain lower on the hierarchy of the whole system (Chen, 2005). Nevertheless, policy measures and strategic initiatives targeted towards informal entrepreneurs should take a holistic approach by viewing socio-economic contextual factors. These policy measures should not be in the direction of eradicating or punishing the informal sector, but rather see it as fertile ground for small enterprises and entrepreneurship (Williams & Nadin, 2012).

3.6.1 Complementary Policies Focusing on Human Capital

Schneider and Karcher (2010) suggest that in order to improve informal enterprises and labor markets, continuity is key. They argue that dealing with informal entrepreneurship is not one major policy, but should have complementary policies such as providing education, vocational training, and skill enhancement that can promote formalization. Again, to identify relevant policy measures, the institutional context should be at the forefront. Transforming informal entrepreneurs to formal entrepreneurs is less important than providing social protection, reducing inequality and helping the vulnerable in many contexts (Castells & Portes, 1989; Portes & Stepick, 1985).

Providing more information and knowledge of rules and regulations regarding business, taxes, marketing, selling platforms, registration and so on represent necessary policy measures. Entrepreneurs in the informal sector need to be educated about the value and benefits of formalization and tax paying (Williams & Vorley, 2015). They can be instructed by training, signs, advertisements, awareness raising campaigns, and normative appeals to persuade entrepreneurs to initiate and participate in the formalization process of the informal sector (Chung & Trivedi, 2003).

3.6.2 Entrepreneurial Environment

Kus (2010) emphasizes various institutional (including immigration, unemployment, low growth rates, poverty, and competition from foreign products) and regional factors when planning for informal entrepreneurs. The institutional context is the very condition of developing programs and policies to efficiently deal with an informal economy. Kus (2010) explains that the development levels of countries cannot fully explain variations in the informal
sector. Indeed, countries with similar growth levels have differently sized informal sectors. Thus, institutional conditions become the starting point to provide incentives to informal entrepreneurs accordingly, i.e., urban versus rural (Babbitt, Brown, & Mazaheri, 2015) or developed versus emerging economy.

Industrialization and modernization can also lower informal entrepreneurial participation (Grosh & Somolekae, 1996). An entrepreneurial environment with interest in the preservation of tradition, heritage and culture should be supported (Ulla Hytti et al., 2015) as it can form a source of resources and competitiveness for most small informal entrepreneurs. As has been discussed, a lack of institutional trust can lead to increased informal transactions, and so policymakers should challenge corruption. By enhancing procedural justice and fairness, governments can regain trust and reduce informal transactions (Williams, & Nadin, 2013, Williams, 2015). The literature has also identified the gender-based challenges faced by informal entrepreneurs. For example, Babbitt et al. (2015) discuss how a lack of credit is a paramount issue for female entrepreneurs, preventing them from connecting with the rest of the economy. Regional differences (urban vs. rural) and education level are other factors that can affect the formalization decisions of female entrepreneurs in the informal sector (Charmes, 2000). Gender-related stereotypes (risk-taking), multiple responsibilities (household, business), socio-cultural environment (religion, customs), and lack of education are prominent factors that may affect the development, growth and formalization of female entrepreneurs in the informal sector (Kabeer, 2005).

### 3.6.3 Formalization Policies

The formalization of informal firms is a significant challenge. Even if the resource mobilization explained above can help the informal businesses to survive the constraints, the attractiveness of enduring constraints and profit-making may only be true in the short term and informal firms may remain informal and small (Giugale et al., 2000). Resource mobilization may help in promoting informal firms in numbers but not in developing them through fostering their growth. The effectiveness of law enforcement (Kus, 2010) and strengthening formal institutions (Freitag, 2003) can play a major role in the formalization of the informal sector. Kus (2010) suggests that law enforcement should be region-specific, meaning that state regulation is only possible in countries with strong formal institutions. Deregulation should be used as a policy tool to formalize informal enterprises in countries where the state is weak. Simon and Birch (1992) examined South African policy initiatives and found that a deregulated environment, incentives and support facilities proved to be beneficial for small informal businesses and improved their status to semi-formalization.
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3.7 Research Gap: Resource Mobilization Activities

Informal entrepreneurship is emerging as an important field and offers plenty of challenges and opportunities for research. The main challenge for researchers is to apply theories from other domains and understand the space in which informal entrepreneurs are located. The opportunity lies in the fact that researchers would be able to implement and study ideas in a unique domain.

The concept of informal entrepreneurship that originated four decades ago has started to receive widespread attention in the entrepreneurship community. The literature reviewed in this chapter signifies the presence and importance of the informal sector around the globe. Informal entrepreneurship is a reality that is a consequence of rapid urbanization and incongruence in the political economy. The main issues addressed in the literature include the motives of entrepreneurs to join the informal sector and how policy initiatives can tackle informal entrepreneurship. This growing importance and volume of informal entrepreneurial activity calls for a systematic and deeper understanding of informal entrepreneurship. To address this scarcity of knowledge, scholars need to take into account the substantive informal sector activity.

The scope of informal entrepreneurship forms a complete battle line. What is a positive outcome and what is not, what is legal and what is legitimate in society (Webb et al., 2009), and the boundaries between a formal and informal sector (Webb, Ireland, & Ketchen, 2014) constitute an unexplored frontier. From a practical standpoint, the high rate of entrepreneurial activity in the informal sector has not been translated into a positive economic transformation (Kistruck, Webb, Sutter, & Bailey, 2015; Kistruck et al., 2011). So, what is the best possible way of allowing informal entrepreneurial activity to translate into positive economic outcomes? Future analyses of informal entrepreneurship in particular contexts should be conducted (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

The literature has revealed different tactics of informal entrepreneurs to mobilize resources to deal with resource-related and contextual constraints. To survive in constrained contexts, informal entrepreneurs rely on tactics (e.g., framing, narrating, social ties, and trust) to navigate policy flaws and market competition. Research suggests that informal entrepreneurs’ knowledge and social capital are important in influencing resource mobilization activities. However, the extent to which social and human capital impacts the resource mobilization activities of informal entrepreneurs is not detailed and requires further research into resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs by looking at micro actions in depth. Welter et al. (2015) suggest researching how much informal entrepreneurial activity is grounded in everyday actions. For example, how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources, the actions of informal entrepreneurs to allocate the local competitive advantage, and the actions of economic actors are only underlined rather than thoroughly investigated.
Burroni et al. (2008) found that public policies to reduce or control informal entrepreneurship fail because they do not look into micro-activities that promote informal entrepreneurship.

The promise of resource mobilization actions used by informal entrepreneurs to the theorization of informal entrepreneurship is that it will support existing arguments and perhaps extend the fundamental question of informal sector entrepreneurship and its problems and potentialities (with a non-western-perspective).

From this synthesis, this dissertation aims to fill the research gap of informal entrepreneurs’ resource mobilization from the human and social capital perspective of entrepreneurship.

## 3.8 My Way Forward

Informal entrepreneurs are often given credit for mitigating the substantial unemployment problem, especially in emerging economies. In order to fulfill this role, they need to mobilize resources despite their resource-constrained environment. The challenge remains in understanding how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources in the initial act of creation and later in the development of their informal firms. Resource Mobilization is an important and relevant question for the informal entrepreneurship phenomenon as there exists no ready-made market to support and sustain informal ventures. Thus, informal enterprises should be interesting enough for the local community to hold the interest of users and domestic market to avoid failure. These challenges are more intense for informal ventures that operate in emerging economies where institutional infrastructure would not provide efficient market mechanisms and that lack regulatory and political structures for informal ventures. Therefore, informal ventures should be very active in resource mobilization.

Resource mobilization is a challenging activity for informal entrepreneurs. Market forces, competition and institutional conditions all pose numerous challenges for informal entrepreneurs, but few resources are available to address these problems. Resource mobilization in the entrepreneurship literature suggests that entrepreneurs can cope with different types of constraints in the penurious environment through their knowledge and network ties. In this resource mobilization activity, entrepreneurs do not only seek information to identify resources, but are also highly dependent on social support from their networks. For example, in the case of informal entrepreneurs, it was evident that informal entrepreneurs rely on family, friends and volunteers to arrange for skills, material and labor for their ventures. Resource mobilization focuses on actions and is a dynamic process that suggests that ventures can learn on the job (Sonenshein, 2014).
Social capital and human capital provide a promising lens to answer the questions relevant to the situation in which informal entrepreneurs operate. The literature demonstrates that small businesses rely on community involvement to leverage required resource base for entrepreneurs in a local context (Johannisson, 1990). The incorporation of different stakeholders (family, friends, volunteers and community) in the resource mobilization process is crucial for informal venture development. Informal entrepreneurship can create a strong sense of community by involving local resources, local labor force and local needs.

Resource mobilization studies suggest that it is not just the possession of a resource that helps or guarantees value creation, but creative problem-solving and effective utilization of resources (Misra & Kumar, 2000). This creative problem-solving to overcoming resource constraints in non-favorable situations has been discussed in the literature, whereby entrepreneurs engage in creative activities to accumulate resources through their human capital, i.e., skills, experience and prior knowledge. Hence resource mobilization is a combination of social capital and human capital mobilization among informal entrepreneurs.

The central guiding research question underlying this study is to understand the impact of social and human capital influencing the resource mobilization of informal entrepreneurial firms.

This research aims to support and extend some of the arguments discussed in the previous two sections. The sub-questions based on themes identified from the existing literature are:

**RQ 1.1 How does the human capital of informal entrepreneurs influence their resource mobilization activity?**

**RQ 1.2 How does the social capital of informal entrepreneurs influence their resource mobilization activity?**

This understanding of how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources for entrepreneurship in a non-western context aims to support and extend current understandings of resource mobilization in the entrepreneurship literature. The role of resource mobilization and unique forms of entrepreneurship become inevitable in informal entrepreneurship research (Welter & Xheneti, 2013), where resource deprivation becomes more prominent (Webb et al., 2009).
4. Event Industry

This dissertation focuses on one type of informal enterprise: informal event planning. Thus, the objective of the research is to understand how informal event planning entrepreneurs mobilize resources and create innovative products and services when the social and economic need exists, but the target demographic remains unwilling to pay at market rates.

4.1 Event Management

According to Getz (1997, 2008), a planned event can be described as a phenomenon that is unique due to interactions in the setting, management and people. There is always a reason for the creation of an event. Once the task of individuals and community initiatives, these events are becoming the task of professionals called event managers. Event managers organize a wide range of planned events such as sports and art events, festivals, conventions, and weddings (Getz, 2008). Shone and Parry describe planned events as special events and define them as a phenomenon arising from those non-routine occasions that have leisure, cultural, personal or organizational objectives set apart from the normal activity of daily life, and whose purpose is to enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people (Shone & Parry, 2004). Different categories of events are depicted in Figure 3 below. Special events can be divided into four categories. Leisure events include sports, leisure and recreation, cultural events such as art, folklore, ceremonial or sacred events, organizational events like commercial, political, charitable or sales events, and finally personal events such as weddings, birthdays and anniversaries (Shone & Parry, 2004).

The number and complexity of events has grown in recent years. The media is helping to push the event industry, contributing to rising need and the number of event planning firms (Helo, 2015). A common suggestion is that events be managed as businesses. Organizations and positions for professional personnel to develop, promote and manage events have been created as a result of their growing importance. Volunteers continue to play a major role in the implementation of events, but more and more are required to undergo training and widen their skills in management (Getz, 1997).
4.2 Event Management in Pakistan

In the last decade, the demand for event planning grew rapidly in Pakistan, but large event planning firms could not be established because of a lack of resources and strict governmental policies, while small informal firms in the event planning sector benefited from contradictory governmental policies. The event planning industry currently includes events of all sizes and types. It does not only comprise planning; management and the execution of planned events also form part of the service. Event planning ventures represent a subset of informal enterprises that attempt to meet the social and economic needs of unemployment, job and wealth creation through informal service delivery and informal project management. These ventures have at their core mission the development and use of strategic, creative, technical and logistical elements. Like other formal ventures, informal event planning ventures address two main issues of entrepreneurship – financial returns and socio-economic impact – but they do so through informal business activity. Informal event planning ventures include for-profit events, non-profit events and government operations, and deploy informal means of entrepreneurship to meet social and economic needs. In spite of the variety of events covered by the industry, their means of mobilizing and arranging resources from a variety of sources such as third-party, beneficiaries, employees, family and friends differ considerably.
Event Planning Industry of Pakistan is on the rise. More and more event planners are mushrooming all over the country. Most of the entrepreneurs entering the industry are starting their businesses on a small scale. Informal entrepreneurship, i.e., starting an unregistered business is a common practice and enjoys social legitimacy and acceptability. There is a high degree of tolerance and legitimacy granted to informal firms that are non-criminal and contribute to solutions for social problems. One larger problem is of unemployment among the educated youth, with entrepreneurship offering a potential solution.

The event planning industry in Pakistan has developed dramatically over the past decade with firms’ increased pursuit of competitiveness and growth strategies. Even though the current political and economic challenges both locally (Pakistan) and globally have significantly compromised the availability of many kinds of resources (especially financial), a growing number of public and private events in Pakistan demand entrepreneurs who are professional, creative and knowledgeable, and who are committed to surviving the constraints. Event planning never stops, operating throughout the year, and so missing a critical resource is not an option. These circumstances provided an opportunity for me to assess variations in informal event planning ventures’ resource mobilizing activities and how informal entrepreneurs maneuver and navigate around different challenges.

The event planning industry in Pakistan is quite layered and diverse. At one end it consists of family businesses with huge investments in the hotel and catering industry that design and provide sophisticated events. At the other end are small informal entrepreneurs from domestic markets with a small resource base. Between these two layers are local formal wedding halls that render it difficult to address all issues in the Pakistani event planning industry.

4.2.1 Evolution of the Events Market

The history of the event planning industry in Pakistan goes back to 1980s, when Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto banned nightclubs. Their former owners thus invested their resources in the event planning industry and started offering a substitute to nightclubs by planning social evenings and gatherings for the local community. The biggest chunk of the events industry in Pakistan involves weddings. In the 1990s, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif banned food items at marriages to lower financial costs and the social burden on the public for wedding ceremony in many wedding halls, restaurants and banquet halls. This low budget wedding policy by stimulated increased wedding events in neighborhoods and private venues. Political interventions created a state of chaos and instigated the decline of the hotel and catering industry. The wedding is a powerful institution in Pakistan, and significant expense is traditionally lavished

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2 Most of this section is informed by expert interview from a senior event planner, Haroon Adeem.
on such events. Indeed, love for food and celebration is a grand cultural narrative in Pakistan when it comes to events and gatherings.

After the decline phase and governmental restrictions on events and nightclub activities, the public largely assumed responsibility for events. Celebrations shifted to neighborhoods, lawns, homes, public parks, and other spaces. These local efforts by individuals continued for a few years, but proved difficult due to average family sizes, the richness of the food, the arrangement of dresses, jewelry, gifts for guests, décor, lighting, music and so on and so forth. Local demands for events thus offered a big market for young graduates and unemployed labor to provide their services. In most cases, the main stimulus behind establishing an events business was that entrepreneurs were managing and arranging their family events free of cost. A new phase in the event planning field commenced whereby many micro and small entrepreneurs launched their own events industries. Most entrepreneurs entered this field from 2004.

Today, Pakistan’s events industry includes hotels and wedding halls, both of which are regulated under government laws and registration procedures. Another popular chunk comprises micro-entrepreneurs, i.e., event planners. Most interestingly, these individuals are setting the trends in the events industry with their creativity in décor, event design and execution. The most popular and largest share of events comes from weddings due to their cultural significance, although other events are also provided.

4.2.2 Wedding Events

Wedding planners play an important role in the category of personal events: to deliver a dream. According to Silvers (2012), there exist six dimensions that the wedding planner must incorporate into a whole in order to deliver the dream: 1) Anticipation, which arises when the invitation to the event is sent out and people look forward to taking part in the event; 2) Arrival, which begins with the decision to attend the event and schedules are planned around this; 3) The atmosphere, which depends on the physical environment of the event, such as décor and audiovisuals; 4) Activity, which incorporates simple discussions between guests, as well as music, dance and show; 5) Appetite, which means the organization and coordination of food and beverages; 6) Amenities, which make the event memorable, such as table gifts, photographs or welcome baskets (Silvers, 2012). Helo (2015) explains the seven steps of the role of wedding planners when organizing a wedding: 1) Sit with the clients to discuss their vision; 2) Research venues for the ceremony, reception and after-party; 3) Research vendors like florists, DJs and caterers; 4) Make the wedding invitations; 5) Create the event program and a master timeline; 6) Manage communication and problem-solving; 7) Evaluate the event afterwards. Wedding planning as a career is a fairly recent concept (Weddings for a Living, 2016) as are weddings as we know them today (Helo, 2015).
4.3 Wedding Situation in Pakistan

The wedding is very important in the context of Pakistan: the wedding industry alone has become worth around 4 trillion PKR according to an estimate. According to Abduhu (2016), the events industry is today the second biggest in Pakistan after the construction sector because it involves dozens of other allied industries like catering, décor, lighting, furniture, cutlery, tents, and food. This growth in the events industry largely occurred between 2008 and 2016 (Abduhu, 2016).

The wedding is the most lavishly celebrated occasion in Pakistan, with excessive spending on clothing, jewelry, accessories, home appliances and much more. In fact, a wedding in Pakistan means creating a new home for the couple from scratch as they prepare to start a new life together. Wedding functions also require considerable spending, from the venue to decorations and the meal (Najam, 2014). Thus, wedding shopping is a gigantic task and requires substantial homework. In the past, the wedding was a very simple affair, with just a few expenses for the bride and groom, and the function was also very simple and usually arranged at homes. Today the trends have totally changed, whereby weddings are usually held at luxury hotels, wedding halls or, as is currently most popular, a marquee. The married couples’ clothes form the most vital part of every wedding because today both men and women tend to be very conscious about their appearance, especially on their big day. Therefore, the fashion industry has come up with fascinating Pret Couture offering the most exquisite designer dresses (Najam, 2014). According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS, 2017), the percentage of marriages in Pakistani population is quite high relative to divorces. In a recent population census, PBS (2017) concluded that around 63% of Pakistan’s population above 15 years is married. Conversely, the divorce rate is 0.3% percent overall (and culturally is discouraged), reflecting how marriages are considered important and are prioritized in both urban and rural settings (PBS, 2017). One obvious reason behind such figures is that marriages are considered important from a religious perspective. Islam encourages marriage and discourage divorce, and being an Islamic country constitutionally, marriages are performed as an Islamic contract among Muslims, and are given due importance among all ethnicities owing to cultural reinforcements. These trends and facts illustrate the priority of wedding both culturally and religiously and reveal why the events industry of Pakistan sees weddings as important.
5. Method

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and clarify the philosophical stance for the study and to describe the methods used to answer the research questions. Subsequently, procedures for data collection, data analysis and coding are discussed.

5.1 Philosophical Assumptions: Pragmatism

“You philosophize when you reflect critically upon what you are actually doing in your world. What you are doing is of course, in the first place, living” Royce (1892).

This dissertation is concerned with exploring the process of entrepreneurial resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Specifically, it addresses the research questions concerning the ways in which social and human capital influence resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. The purpose of the study is to reflect on the mundane activities of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. The pragmatic tradition is similar to what we call entrepreneurial everyday actions (Berglund & Wenneberg, 2016). From a pragmatic perspective, entrepreneurs are characterized by their ability to take action and to practically implement a project, rather than how a project should proceed (Berglund & Wenneberg, 2016). Pragmatism takes knowledge to be relevant only if it supports action. Knowledge of the pragmatic tradition is truthful to the extent that it is successful in guiding action, thus showing that knowing and doing are part of the same process (Van de Ven, 2007).

Pragmatism is a philosophical movement emanating from the inspiring work of Sanders Peirce (1935), William James (1890/2011), and Chauncey Wright, as well as John Dewey (1916/2012) and George Herbert Mead. Their central idea was that the main goal of thinking and theorizing is not to accurately represent objective reality, but rather to help humanity progress by developing knowledge that allows us to achieve things and more generally helps us negotiate problems and challenges as they arise. Pragmatism corresponds to the assumption that objective reality exists, but that the perception of reality is shaped by the subjective views of individuals (Almeder, 2007). Pragmatism recognizes that no single point of view can give the entire picture and there are many ways of interpreting the multiple realities of world and undertaking research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). From a “pragmatic” perspective, an entrepreneur is a problem-solver; doubt creates the need for action and is the cause of innovation (Shepherd et al., 2007). The entrepreneur acts when challenged by the external conditions. Pragmatic philosophy takes an interest in the individual and social behavior occurring in a particular context. Pragmatism acknowledges the fact that human
behavior arises as the environment varies, and the prediction of human behavior adapts as the behavior adapts. Pragmatic philosophers tend to use these predictions about human behavior for the improvement of ordinary experiences.

The idea of pragmatism identifies with the logic of abduction (Bertilsson, 2004). Pierce (cf Yu, 2006, 3) states that “Deduction proves that something must be, Induction shows that something is operative, Abduction merely suggests that something may be.” The aim of abduction (Van de Ven, 2007) is to create new knowledge through the development of explanations, and it can be seen as inductive top-down theorizing (Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). Abduction is an alternative to induction and deduction (Sayer, 1992), which is a research process of going backward to explain events that have been caused by certain mechanisms (Easton, 2010). Lawson (2010) sees it as a process that starts with the conception of the phenomenon, before moving from that conception to some other cause that has created the phenomenon in question. Abduction is a closely related process and has been suggested for pragmatic-inspired research, especially for case-based research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Abduction starts with the conception of the phenomenon and leads to new assumptions and ideas in the phenomenon (Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, & Karlsson, 2002). The new conception is not final; further framing of problems would frame fresh conceptions (Mounce & Mounce, 1997).

Therefore, this dissertation is designed as qualitative with abductive reasoning. There are several reasons why qualitative research with abductive reasoning is appropriate for this study. First, the understanding of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in the prior literature is too broad and complex that the researcher’s own understanding of the concepts must be in focus and set as a point of departure. Given that I need to communicate this understanding of resource mobilization actions by informal entrepreneurs to others, I first need to understand the concept myself before becoming involved in data collection and analysis. The process began with a review of existing concepts, facts, and research into informal entrepreneurship and social and human capital for resource mobilization. This exercise helped generate interview themes so that the phenomenon could emerge empirically from the data and helped in reasoning. Respectively in pragmatism, actions are influenced by conditions of context. These conditions of context may include structures (e.g., networks) or other objects like entrepreneurs with their actions, whereby one object cannot produce an outcome alone, but rather through interactions with other objects. I believe that pragmatism and the logic of abduction will help me understand problem-solving among informal entrepreneurs and the ways in which entrepreneurs mobilize resources in their everyday lives.
5.2 Research Process

I answer the research questions by following a qualitative methodology appropriate to understanding the research questions formulated for the current study. I use a qualitative methodology because it allows us to see the world in action and it confronts the mundane and everyday social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009).

This qualitative practice of research depicts the relationship between five phases that help define the whole research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). The phases developed and followed in this thesis are illustrated in Figure 4. In Phase 1 I decided on the philosophical position as a researcher and combine ontological and epistemological assumptions to gain knowledge on my specific research problem of, resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Phase 2 refers to strategies of inquiry, seeking to integrate the whole research design. To situate myself in an empirical world it was important to consider the question of representation and legitimation. Therefore, this phase bridges theoretical paradigms and methodological choices (e.g., case study, interviews, observation, etc.) to collect data. Phase 3 involved the collection and analysis of data. Here data management (e.g., field notes, coding, indexing, etc.) were important to finding an interpretation. Phase 4 was the creative procedure of interpretation and evaluation of data, both thoroughly and honestly.

![Figure 4 Research Process](followed for this Dissertation and inspired by Denzin and Lincoln (2000)](image)

Next are question of data collection, organization, and analysis methodologies for the practical analyses of social theory. These choices are discussed one-by-one in the following sections.
5.3 Strategy of Inquiry (Multiple Cases)

The current study is based on a qualitative case study design (Bowen, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1999). A case study design of research allows us to study a phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 1999), in this case resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs (phenomenon) and the event planning industry in Pakistan (case). The latter includes examples of 15 entrepreneurial cases in two different cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad) that help represent the event planning industry in this country. A case design is selected because it permits focus on the details of interactions and actions of informal entrepreneurs, in order to understand activities in certain circumstances as well as their dynamics (Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 1995). A case approach is appropriate to acquiring comprehensive data utilizing different sources to explore the underlying contexts, actions and activities of informal entrepreneurs to mobilize resources. Moreover, case studies are suitable when the intention is to understand meanings in a context (Easton, 2010; Sayer, 1992), and where the dynamics of the situation within the context are important (Dobson, 2001). This research project is concerned with the different influences of social and human capital on the resource mobilization actions of informal entrepreneurs. For a real understanding of how resource mobilization actions are influenced and generated, a case study design offers contextual focus. Little research has gone into the documentation of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs from a developing country perspective, and so the case approach aims to identify unknown and unanswered research gaps.

A multiple case approach means that two or more cases are conducted. This approach is selected so that findings can be compared across cases (Yin, 1999). An additional motivation for using a multiple case design is to draw similarities among multiple cases from the event planning industry that may demonstrate different aspects of resource mobilization phenomena. Moreover, this approach is used to establish analytic generalizations (Yin, 1999).

A multiple case design is also necessary in order to understand the varying influences of social and human capital on the resource mobilization actions of informal entrepreneurs. It is not really possible to say that what kinds of influences social and human capital have on the resource mobilization actions of informal entrepreneurs. As a result, it is not easy to state how many cases should be selected before going into the field.

The next question concerns the type of cases to employ for this dissertation. Stake (1995) has identified three types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. The intrinsic case refers to the study of a particular case. Having an intrinsic interest in that particular case does not mean that it would necessarily provide generalized understanding about some problem or phenomenon, but rather that it is important in itself, e.g., a teacher studying a student who is having difficulty in learning. An instrumental case provides a general understanding. It
Method

would accomplish an understanding of some phenomenon, such as studying student grading system. The interest here is not individually based (Stake, 1995). Each case will be important and instrumental in understanding and theorizing a phenomenon (Stake, 1995).

5.3.1 Case Study Development

Case development is an important process as it can lead to novel and empirically valid findings (Eisenhardt, 1989). Table 1 below presents the process of case study development as applied in this study. Stake (1995) argues that it is often not possible to decide between intrinsic and instrumental interests. Multiple cases have been followed and analyzed in current study thus adopting collective case study method. Each case has been evaluated intrinsically by its distinctiveness, and then compared with one another to evaluate them instrumentally. These intrinsic and instrumental interests led to the development of case studies in two phases. First, building cases to see how firms engage in resource mobilization activities when they are establishing themselves. Second, to develop an account of activities involved in the informal entrepreneurial resource mobilization phenomenon based on findings and comparisons across cases.
Table 1 Case Study Development Process (Applied to Current Study, Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Applied to the current study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting Started</strong></td>
<td>Research question/prior constructs definitions</td>
<td>Initial conceptualization of entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selecting Cases</strong></td>
<td>Theoretical sampling</td>
<td>Young, informal micro enterprises from the event planning industry of Pakistan were considered appropriate to study resource-related practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crafting Instruments</strong></td>
<td>Multiple sources of data</td>
<td>Interviews, archives, documents (case level); policies and legislation analysis (government level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entering the Field</strong></td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Data collected in three phases to follow cases retrospectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Organizing</strong></td>
<td>Recordings, transcriptions</td>
<td>Data were first audiotaped and then transcribed using MS Word. NVivo 10 and 11 were used to organize data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Intrinsic case analysis/data coding</td>
<td>Established coding procedures (attribute coding, thematic and relationship coding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Instrumental analysis of cases/data coding</td>
<td>Data reduction, data display, thematic and relationship coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Iteration of coding schemes across cases, propositions, relationships</td>
<td>Discussion across cases on the entrepreneurial search for resources among informal entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enfolding Literature</strong></td>
<td>Comparing with similar/conflicting literature</td>
<td>Drawing verifications, i.e., confirmations and contradictions from existing literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reaching Closure</strong></td>
<td>Theoretical saturation</td>
<td>Conclusions and implications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 Getting Started: Research Questions

The guiding research question for the dissertation is rooted in actions involved in resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Resource mobilization through entrepreneurial networks holds promise for informal entrepreneurship. First, informal ventures often face severe constraints but must come up with creative forms of problem-solving. Second, informal entrepreneurship emerges out of incongruities or gaps that are not covered by public or formal private institutions, and resource mobilization through networking often occurs in the absence of formal support.

5.5 Selection of Cases: Purposeful Sampling & Theoretical Saturation

A number of selection criteria were developed to ensure that appropriate cases were selected. First it was determined that to be included in the study, a firm should have been established as a micro enterprise at startup phase. Second, only cases from the event planning industry were selected. Third, to be included in the study, respondents with experience of micro enterprises in events planning industry had to be willing to participate. Fourth, for practical reasons such as language, time and finances, all cases were selected from the twin cities of Pakistan located in Punjab (Islamabad and Rawalpindi). This would help guarantee a certain benchmark in the selection of cases.

In order to adhere to the selection criteria, practical selection was carried out in several steps. The cases that were micro enterprises at the time of startup (i.e., entrepreneurs who were either self-employed or began with fewer than 10 employees) were searched. The selection of cases was concept-driven as the State Bank of Pakistan states that micro enterprises in the country are generally resource-constrained. These cases were contacted and briefly questioned in initial contact about basic demographic characteristics at the time of startup, e.g., licensing, raw materials, credit constraints, and labor.

Cases were selected based on their suitability and availability, as they should illuminate the relationships between logic and constructs, and allow for learning (Stake, 1995). A purposeful sampling (Bowen, 2008) methodology was selected for this study. Burns (1997) argues that a purposeful approach directs case selection towards those cases that best serve a study’s purposes and objectives. The cases should allow for the generation of insights and understandings regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the ideal site would be one where access is possible, and a range of people, processes, interactions and structures are available (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). In purposeful sampling, the cases selected are directly linked to the objectives and purposes drawn from
theory, i.e., theoretical sampling. In theoretical sampling, cases are selected because they are suitable and have the potential to contribute to the replication or extension of existing theory (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). In short, the main strength of purposeful sampling lies in the selection of information-rich cases and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher (Patton, 1990). As projected and mentioned above, the sample for this thesis was motivated by purposeful sampling. It was briefly discussed in Chapter 1 that Pakistan was selected as the main research area for this study and the sector chosen to be studied is the event planning industry. The study consists of individual cases embedded in twin cities, which were selected using a purposeful sampling technique to ascertain diverse, information-rich cases (Patton, 1990). This approach is useful in explaining possible variations in the outcomes of entrepreneurial activity on community-level value creation.

The size of the sample was not determined in advance; rather, the sample evolved of its own accord during the data collection process (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Data saturation allowed to include participants in the study until the dataset was complete (Bowen, 2008). Replication in the data verifies data saturation and completion (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2002).

Another important issue was the sample’s diversity, i.e., homogeneous versus heterogeneous. Homogeneous samples allow for the study of focused and precise questions, while heterogeneous samples enable exploration of alternative explanations for a phenomenon (Van de Ven, 2007). Heterogeneity in the sample allows for comparisons among the population, and by extending the scope of the population, a researcher can extend the scope of knowledge (Van de Ven, 2007). Given the tradeoffs of homogeneous versus heterogeneous cases, Pettigrew (1997) recommends informed sites and different types of cases, i.e., both successful and unsuccessful cases. Moreover, unusual cases would permit identification of the limitations of a study. Following these guidelines, I opted for both homogeneity and heterogeneity in the sample (see Table 2). Homogeneity was achieved by studying cases from the event planning industry in the region of Islamabad and Rawalpindi (known as the twin cities of Pakistan). Homogeneity helped achieve a focus on the challenges and environment in which entrepreneurs operate in these similar regions. Heterogeneity in the sample was achieved through the mixture of female and male entrepreneurs, successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs, family and non-family firms, startup and established firms, and informal and formal firms. The case of Jungle managed by Haroon Adeem, (later used to understand about historical developments in the events industry in Pakistan from both a private and public sector perspective) is the one that is most unusual as it is owned by the public sector and works with a unique business model. Pakistan served as the best option theoretically (Bowen, 2008), as well as being the site with which I have most information (Pettigrew, 1997), having been born and lived in Pakistan.
Table 2 Homogeneity versus Heterogeneity within the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety in Sample</th>
<th>Homogeneity</th>
<th>Event Planning Industry</th>
<th>Similar Region Islamabad, Rawalpindi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterogeneity within sample</td>
<td>Female entrepreneurs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male entrepreneurs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-family</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Successful/survivor</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unsuccessful/ready to exit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiles</td>
<td>The range of different events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal status</td>
<td>Informal, formal, semi-formal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development phase</td>
<td>The startup, the survivor, established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5.1 Sample Based on the Empirical Setting of Pakistan

The empirical setting for studying entrepreneurial resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in Pakistan offers several gains for fulfilling the respective research objectives. It is a populous country composed of different regions with considerable geographic, economic, and demographic diversity. It has a complex entrepreneurial environment featuring different challenges and resource constraints. Structural constraints render it an interesting empirical setting as the true value of entrepreneurship is best observed when opportunities and resources are meager (Kodithuwakku & Rosa, 2002). In Pakistan, informal entrepreneurship has constituted an urgent issue of debate that has been on the agenda of economists and policy-makers for decades. It is part of the policy of economic development to ensure growth and progress in all regions, and to minimize the divide between the formal and informal economy in order to safeguard the well-being and wealth of citizens.

The current development plan for Pakistan emphasizes how promoting entrepreneurship constitutes a key priority, being an important contributor to economic development. Overall, Pakistan is an agricultural country with many natural resources, although it is transforming into a knowledge society. The agricultural profile means that much of the population continues to reside in rural areas and interior areas. Thus, this increased political and policy focus on the informal economy provides an excellent opportunity for this research to contribute to public discourse concerning informal entrepreneurship and offer policy implications.
5.5.2 Final Sample Size

Theoretical saturation is a consequence of theoretical sampling, i.e., sampling by theoretical relevance (Bowen, 2008). Theoretical saturation does not go after sample size but sample adequacy, i.e., when redundancy in the data is achieved, increasing the sample size would not be necessary (Bowen, 2008). Sampling adequacy addresses the depth (expanding knowledge gaps) and breadth (scope) of the phenomenon under study (Bowen, 2008). For qualitative research, most scholars agree that saturation is achieved with a sample size of at least 5-25 participants, including 20-36 interviews (Mason, 2010). Following these guidelines, a diverse group of entrepreneurial ventures from the event planning industry was selected (including different legal and social structures, e.g., formal/informal, family/non-family, male/female ventures, young/established, failure/success, etc.) to ensure potential theoretical diversity (Eisenhardt, 1989). This diversity also satisfies the purposeful sampling methodology. This sample was formulated through going through informal online databases of event planners in Pakistan, references from friends, and recommendations from local entrepreneurs. These 15 cases are presented in detail in Chapter 5. The sample of 15 cases is considered sufficient owing to the research design, i.e., in-depth interviewing.

Table 3 provides an overview of 15 entrepreneurial cases. This final sample is motivated by the factors that follow the theoretical sampling and data saturation strategies. First, I selected the event planning industry believing that creative entrepreneurs involved in event planning sector face resource constraints. I identified instances not only of resource constraints but also several structural constraints, along with behaviors to overcome these situations. These behaviors were varied and illustrated a dynamic mindset to approaching resource constraints, including combinations of networking and information-seeking activities. Such initial observations were interesting and enabled the sample to evolve from eight to 15 firms over time. These firms included different cases such as startups, survivors, beyond survival and even a few cases of failures. The final sample of 15 cases seemed sufficient to meeting the data saturation requirement.

Other factors that affected the final sample selection including the accessibility of the organization (i.e., traveling), the willingness of founders and stakeholders to participate in the research, sufficient experience of events and constrained scenarios by cases (firm age & experience), industry (firm profile), and language (Urdu). The diversity in the sample thus satisfies the theoretical sampling approach.

The list was informally discussed with two experts at the civil services, Ms. RT and Mr. AF. Both have extensive experience in policies and trade.

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3 Only initials of real names are used, complete names are not given because of privacy concerns.
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development, the workforce situation and entrepreneurship status of Pakistan. The list was also discussed with a colleague at Fatima Jinnah Women University, Sheheryar Naveed, who is Assistant Professor in Entrepreneurship as well as a former event planner. Possessing experience in this field, his opinions provided valuable feedback regarding the list of the final sample to be used in the study. Secondary data regarding the selected firms comprised background information collected through websites, newspaper articles, and publications for initial screening.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Founded as</th>
<th>Current Legal Status</th>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Background Knowledge &amp; Experience</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Location of Main Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Royale Event Management</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Wedding events</td>
<td>Financial (Bilal) and Marketing (Hammad) experts</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>Islamabad (ISB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Occasions</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Wedding + corporate events</td>
<td>Serial entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rawalpindi (RWP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>Founded by parent company</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Concerts, commercial events + corporate events</td>
<td>Business graduate, family business (Ibrahim)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Miradore</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Wedding + corporate events</td>
<td>Engineer (Tipu), business graduates</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Craft Manager</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Indoor games + informal artisan exhibitions and events</td>
<td>Economics graduate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>RWP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Party Place</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Switched to a banking job</td>
<td>Birthdays</td>
<td>Business graduate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Studio Events</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Birthdays + Gift boxes</td>
<td>Business graduate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nutshell</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Corporate events + commercial events (concerts, fashion shows)</td>
<td>Business graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>RWP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nr.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Founded as</td>
<td>Current Legal Status</td>
<td>Profile</td>
<td>Background Knowledge &amp; Experience</td>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Location of Main Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bia Interiors</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Consultation, few events related to weddings, engagements</td>
<td>Speech therapist, graduate from the USA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>RWP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Potter’s Wheel</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
<td>Seminars, workshops, corporate events</td>
<td>Graphic designer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Revelations</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
<td>Affordable events for youth (birthdays, dinners, engagements, etc.)</td>
<td>Business graduate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Flower King</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>Aviation retired captain, flower shop</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ADS Events</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>Guesthouse business</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Even to</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>A business graduate, marketing job</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ISB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>Fashion reporter and event organizer at newspaper agency (Dawn), business graduate from London</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>RWP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6  Level and Unit of Analysis

The level of analysis for this study comprises individual (entrepreneurs) and micro enterprises (entrepreneurial ventures). The primary unit of analysis for this study is ‘entrepreneurial activity’ (entrepreneur’s actions to mobilize resources).

The choice of the level of analysis is important for the utilization of appropriate theories (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007). The level of analysis refers to the hierarchy of aggregation regarding micro (e.g., teams, individuals, firms) and macro levels (e.g., region, nation) (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2007) used to study the research problem methodologically. The pragmatic approach allows for the integration of several levels of analysis, which can facilitate capture of the mechanisms and influential factors surrounding the entrepreneurial action. Multiple levels of analysis allow for observing different key factors that can explain explored phenomena both at the macro and micro level (Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004). Likewise, Davidsson and Wiklund (2007) recommend multiple levels of analysis to understand the very nature of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, the unit of analysis is the focus of what is being explored. Thus, the two concepts are intertwined and cannot be separated; together they form the design of the study.

5.7  Data Sources: Primary and Secondary Data

The primary empirical data (15 cases as final sample size) were collected in phases from August 2013 until October 2015, a total period of 2.2 years. In order to conduct the interviews, founders or senior management team members were initially contacted by phone. During this first phone call, I introduced myself and provided a brief overview as to the purpose of my research, and also requested a visit to the firm’s office to further develop a working relationship. In a few cases, I also emailed after my phone call to clarify the purpose of the office visit and briefly share my research objective. I contacted 15 firms, and owing to delays in responses, a refusal to participate in research over a longer period, a confidentiality issue and simply not responding, only eight were approached for data collection (although seven more cases were added later). I guided the conversation, and an interview guide was prepared beforehand. At the end of the first meeting, the research objective was explained again in detail to establish a trustworthy working relationship, as well as to gain consent to participate in the research for a longer period. Apart from respondents’ consent, I also reserved the option to see if the case would be suitable for theoretical sampling or not. This first meeting was undertaken with the purpose of data collection. Actual
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Interviews were conducted after the first meeting, and this tradition was maintained for all cases. In all of the cases I conducted an initial phone call or email, an introductory meeting, and only then were additional interviews conducted for data collection. In all cases, the founders were interviewed, and where possible senior management team members were also involved in the interviews. However, in a few cases where the founder served as senior management (the firm being very small in size), this option was not possible. The lists of eight participants were further discussed briefly with Haroon Adeem, who works in the event management field and is a former event planner himself. This expert interview was suggested by my mother, who knew Adeem for a long time as a colleague and family friend. His views were important, not only in terms of understanding his experience in the event planning business, but also to note the evolution and development of the industry in Pakistan over time. Indeed, Adeem has worked in the field of event management for over 37 years. He used to have his own event planning firm, but exited after a few years, before switching back to the industry with other prestigious public firms. From this feedback, the main suggestion that I received was to enlarge the sample to seek diversity and variations in the data. Thus, in order to achieve data saturation and diversity, I contacted 15 more firms, and gained access to seven more firms using the procedure described above.

From this exercise I developed a final list of 15 cases for data collection that not only matched theoretical sampling but were also committed to participating in the research process over a longer period. In total I conducted 38 in-depth interviews, lasting for 90-120 minutes on average. I also had additional interactions, online follow-up over email, Skype and Facebook, direct observations and secondary sources. These multiple sources of data for 15 cases provided rich data that provided theoretical saturation (Corbin & Strauss, 2014), hence no more cases were required for data collection. The entrepreneurial process is dynamic and involves different conditions. Therefore, different data sources could improve the validity of data.

Apart from the primary data, secondary data were collected from different sources such as websites, reports, newspapers, Facebook, magazine, and articles (see Table 5). These secondary data sources allowed for the richness of the data (Patton, 1990). Information on websites, magazines, Facebook and YouTube helped validate and cross-check the primary data attained through interviews, such as regarding the background of the business, the business concept, and the services or products that the companies offer to clients. Such data sources were used to enrich the information yielded in the case descriptions by providing photos and figures.
5.8 Data Collection Phases

In order to design the fieldwork, scholars use multiple sources of data to increase their confidence as a researcher and to help avoid extraneous influences. Multiple sources may involve the use of a mixture of sources like interviews, observations and document review, i.e., inquiring, experiencing and examining (Wolcott, 1994). These multiple sources provide alternatives to help fill the gaps in the body of information and perspectives and help bring the researcher to an incident or perspective they may not have previously considered (Stake, 1995). They allow for rich, emergent and diverse information collection as well as verifying and validating the information by going back and forth between data (Flick, 2004; Lofland, 1995).

Data were collected using policy documents and feasibility reports at the national level, as well as through visits in communities, events, inventory outlets, and offices. Expert interviews with local policy-makers Ms. RT, Mr. AF and informal social contacts (friends, family members, colleagues) were also conducted. On the individual/venture level, interviews with principal founders and managers were conducted from August 2013 until October 2015 in three phases, excluding initial meetings and follow-ups. Moreover, documents, websites and social media were used alongside visits to event venues and inventory outlets.

Although the data collected from 15 event planners constitutes a small sample relative to the entire event planning industry, multiple data sources allowed me to consider entrepreneurial activities and practices in the local context of Pakistan in detail. Indeed, these different pieces of evidence helped add breadth and depth to case analysis as well as building my confidence in adding a critical perspective and reflecting on theoretical and empirical sources (Jick, 1979). Therefore, multiple sources of data for data collection were always prioritized (Yin, 2003). The case study database was maintained through NVivo, and all of the interview recordings, coded transcripts, pictures and memos were saved on this software. I started with NVivo 10 and it was later updated to NVivo 11 in 2016. In-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face and at official premises for direct observations. Godowns, i.e., storage houses owned by some entrepreneurs and event venues, were also visited to observe the organizing and managing of resources and to observe and understand operations.

Data were collected adopting a qualitative approach in phases (Holland, Thomson, & Henderson, 2004). Qualitative data collection in phases refers to research embodying in-depth interview-based studies involving returning to interviewees to understand recent changes that may occur over time, as well as the processes associated with these changes (Holland et al., 2004). Data collection in phases is relevant for research that studies activities describing how things progress over time (Van de Ven, 2007). This type of study takes the historical developmental perspective focusing on incidents and entrepreneurial activities.
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unfolding over a time period (Van de Ven, 2007). In order to achieve the purpose of the study, data were collected in retrospective accounts. Retrospective research studies allow researchers to see the big picture, as the outcome of the studied activity is known (Van de Ven, 2007). However, retrospection may also have a risk of bias, especially when we are aware of outcomes, and so to avoid this bias I relied on archival data, retrospective accounts, and observations by attending a few events, making frequent follow-ups and informal contacts, and asking for present time events and activities (Pettigrew, 1997). There are no limits to conducting research over a certain period; this decision should be taken by the researcher (Holland et al., 2004). In Table 4, data collection phases are summarized in order. The primary empirical data were collected from August 2013 to October 2015. For data collection, it was important to use multiple sources of evidence and to maintain a chain of evidence (Yin, 2003). For multiple sources for data collection, the study used observation, interviewing and secondary materials.

5.8.1 Initial Contact

I began my fieldwork in August 2013 with a pilot study in order to become more familiar with the empirical context of Pakistan and to identify potential cases. In so doing, I was able to observe eight cases and obtain a basic understanding of entrepreneurship in Pakistan. This understanding infused my desire to unpack micro-entrepreneurship in Pakistan. The 15 cases were not all identified when I started conducting my fieldwork. At first, I contacted few micro enterprises with event planning profile and asked for their interest in participating in the study. Those who were willing to become involved for a longer period were then contacted. I later added more cases, considering the advice of local experts in event planning and the need to understand and address the research scope through rich data. This exercise led to the addition of seven more cases, and so a final sample size of 15.

5.8.2 Phase 1

The first phase of primary data collection began in February to March 2014 and consisted of getting to know the entrepreneurs and allowing them to tell the story of why they embarked on their entrepreneurial journey, from the moment they first thought up the idea for the business until its present status. During this phase, one or two interviews were conducted with top management and an entrepreneur. Each interview lasted 90-120 minutes on average. In this phase, I first re-emphasized my research’s aim, purpose, the importance of participating, and confidentiality issues. I aimed to obtain a general understanding of the entrepreneurs’ profiles and their businesses and to understand business concepts, as well as to reconsider my choices.
All interviews were audiotaped, photos were taken (where permitted), and observations were noted. This exercise produced rich data, which I organized in NVivo and separated into two paper folders. I started preparing case descriptions using these data, which were collected retrospectively. This exercise continued for the next five months. Owing to retrospection in the data, I realized that the firms that I was studying were mostly informal at the beginning. The additional major theoretical understanding was that I was looking for bricolage as resource constraint concept. However, I found broader concepts, demanding that I return to the theory. Previous literature has emphasized entrepreneurial resource mobilization as a broader concept that emerged as a main theoretical issue. I started studying resource mobilization and informal entrepreneurship for two months. I subsequently decided to return to the field and start collecting relevant data.

5.8.3 Phase 2

I proceeded to the second phase of data collection from September 2014 until January 2015. During this phase, at which point the entrepreneurs had become familiar with me having met me a few times, they were much more open to talking about their businesses. From the first phase I was able to identify some emerging themes, thus during phase two I focused on acquiring more information on those themes related to resource mobilization and informal entrepreneurship. By the end of phase two I had obtained fairly rich empirical material on resource mobilization and how informal entrepreneurs progressed through various activities. Interviews lasted between 60–120 minutes on average.

5.8.4 Phase 3

I focused on obtaining follow-up information in July 2015, and this was the time when I realized that my fieldwork reached saturation because the additional information, I was obtaining from the interviews did not contribute much to gaining a new understanding (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). This phase was followed by a short follow-up in October 2015. After that time, I followed the cases through their websites, YouTube or Facebook Pages. I am also now Facebook friends with some of my interviewees, and so I occasionally ask them for an update in a very informal and friendly manner.
### Table 4 Data Collected in Phases

(adapted from Van de Ven, 2007, p. 198)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development * Events</td>
<td>Beginning (background)</td>
<td>Arrangements (entrepreneurial activities)</td>
<td>End (resource behaviors success/failure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Business concept, profile, creativity, resources, structure, strategic alternatives</td>
<td>Develop awareness, experience, estimate needs of resources required, strategic planning, develop solutions, collaborations, externally oriented planning, internally oriented planning</td>
<td>Evaluating choices and business goals, setting future objectives, estimating resources needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These events can repeatedly occur during the life of the organization and do not necessarily represent any sort of chronology (Van de Ven, 2007).
5.9 Data Collection Tools

Given that case studies pertain to people and their activities, interviews can form a crucial part of a case study strategy (Yin, 1994). Interviews can help develop an understanding of the details of participants’ ventures such as structures, systems and processes (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson, & Lowe, 2008). In order to conduct interviews, some degree of systemization is also very important so that findings can be rendered comparable between cases (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). An interview guide was prepared by considering this tension between being flexible and systematic. The interview guide was not strictly prescriptive but rather helped keep the research on track and covering all key issues. In this regard, Perry (1998) advises that interviews should start with general questions to explore participants’ meanings and subjective understandings, and then increasingly converge on the significant issues through the use of probing questions. Thus, the interviews were designed to be semi-structured, which can help explore the multiple realities of the participants (Stake, 1995). Moreover, the purpose of such interviews was not to attain simple ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answers, but rather descriptions, explanations and linkages to episodes (Stake, 1995). The interviews were recorded (when permitted by the participant), and I took notes whilst listening carefully to make good connections, clarifications, and interactions. I ensured to make the interviews feel important and listened to, and endeavored to help them enjoy the process, as it is important to understand what the interviewee meant not what they said (Stake, 1995). Understanding language and culture played a very important role in the quality of interviews and interpretations. Indeed, there can be different ways of saying the same things, which are only linked via language and cultural manifestations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). Therefore, it was very important that I as a researcher be fluent in the participants’ language and have a strong familiarity with their culture. This helped add layers of meanings and interpretations to the data analysis.

As has been mentioned, the research locale was Pakistan (specifically Punjab), and being Pakistani and belonging to the area of Punjab I am very familiar with the language and cultural manifestations of the region. For this study, interviews were conducted with the principal founders, co-founder, and top managers of 15 micro enterprises (in total 25 individuals, including team entrepreneurs) in order to gather information on a set of actions that helped in the search for resources. These interviews served as the main foundation for the empirical material, as they allowed me to enter into entrepreneur’s perspective and see things that I could not observe directly (Patton, 1990). A semi-structured guide was prepared for an interview beforehand. It included questions about the entrepreneur (background, demographics, education, and experience), entrepreneurial activities, venture, locality, community, customers, and the context in which the ventures are located. I started by asking general questions, before moving to more specific questions as iterative data collection progressed. All questions were open-ended.
to provide both open and unexpected direction to answers. However, probes were used wherever required to dig for more information (Mowday & Sutton, 1993).

Thus, these interviews were crucial in understanding the contextual aspects of the entrepreneurial activities, through understanding entrepreneurs’ experiences in maneuvering through local contexts. On average, each interview lasted for 90 minutes (although some were closed to 120 minutes) and were conducted at the ventures’ premises in the mother tongue of Urdu.

Different types of questions are categorized in Table 5. These questions were grouped into themes (Patton, 2003), derived from the relevant literature. The themes involved enabling and constraining factors, experience from the community, resource accumulation, social support, and other issues. A complete list of themes in the form of a translated interview guide is available in Appendix II. This divide between entrepreneurs’ related information and contextual information helped me attain comparable entrepreneurial profiles and reflections regarding the overall local environment context available for event planning ventures. The follow-up over two years helped uncover activities, actions and decisions in the past (at pre-startup and startup phases) as well as the present-day situation of the community, context, goals, inventory, strategy, competition, challenges, and other themes. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

**Table 5 Categories of Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Questions</th>
<th>Examples of Questions Included in Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific questions</td>
<td>Personal accounts of entrepreneurs, background, experience, education, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about individual case</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial activities, startup, profile, location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions regarding resource search activities, strategies (this helped develop comparable patterns of findings across multiple cases)</td>
<td>Resources, resource search activities, strategies, decisions along the way (both during the startup phase and after startup, i.e., early years and the current time of operation, i.e., time of data collection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions asked regarding entire study (this helped develop comparable patterns of findings across multiple cases)</td>
<td>Locality, community, the context in which ventures are embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative questions</td>
<td>Challenges, recommendations, for proper resource arrangement, entrepreneurial activities, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations are another important source of information in a case study strategy. Indeed, they have been characterized as the fundamental basis for all research methods in the social and behavioral sciences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). Research site visits provide the opportunity for direct observations that can range from formal to informal (Yin, 1999). Formal observations may include controlled experiments, while informal can include observations of body language, physical
settings, and human activities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Observations in qualitative research help in recognizing and sorting meaning, so it is important that researcher keep a good record of events for a relatively incontestable description of a case (Stake, 1995). However, it is also crucial not to give any judgmental responses to participants during interviews, and to instead observe the body language of participants (Kahn & Cannell, 1957). Observations from the reader’s perspectives are very important to afford them a sense of being presence, requiring the contexts to be described in detail. I frequently visited the different event venues created by these entrepreneurs. I also visited inventory outlets and venture premises to develop a more vivid understanding of the thoughts of participants (Brundin, 2007). Moreover, observing the organizational structures and physical settings of participants represented another key strategy employed during interview sessions. Actions taken to develop trustworthy and comfortable working relationship (Kahn & Cannell, 1957) involved a conscious effort to avoid any emotional, encouraging or judgmental cues that might affect respondents’ answers.

Gathering data by studying documents follows the same line of thinking as observing and interviewing, being organized but prepared for unexpected clues (Stake, 1995). Having a time plan concerning the usefulness of documents when reviewing is important, even if the researcher does not strictly follow it. Important documents vary from case to case, but newspaper clippings, presentations and websites constituted some of the important documents in which I was interested. I additionally analyzed entrepreneurship laws and clustering policies at governmental level to establish the context in which these firms operate. My understanding of policies helped me build a history and scenario of the cases and interpret meanings from the data collected. For a general understanding and background information on the context that the venture exists in, assistance was attained from expert policy analysts regarding the entrepreneurship situation in Pakistan.

### 5.10 Data Organizing

NVivo is a user-friendly research software that helps facilitate the analysis of qualitative data by drawing codes and patterns. Therefore, it helped organize data (transcriptions, pictures, websites, and audiotaped interviews) in one place, as well as draw codes from individual cases. The case study database in NVivo 10 helped me manage multiple sources of information. This database included raw materials (audio tapes), partially processed data (transcriptions), manually coded data (based on interview themes), evidence-based coding, an iterative coding scheme, other analytic data, my critical reflection and observation, data display, documentation of cases, and analysis. These codes were further analyzed across cases. The parallels drawn could also help in grouping the themes originating from the cases, as an important step for theory-building. Moreover, tables in
Excel were generated to display themes and findings in different sections. Where possible, figures were included to increase the structure and visibility of the data analysis. Conclusions and verifications were only possible at some stage of theoretical saturation and through the literature (Eisenhardt, 1989).

5.11 Transcribing and Coding

Miles (1979) has emphasized that qualitative data analysis is the most demanding process of research, with no shortcuts available (Delamont, 1992). It starts as soon as the process of coding commences, and to make this analysis systematic, the coding scheme should match the research aims (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Raw data might look interesting, but it does not mean anything until it is made understandable for readers. This process of linking data to theory and the literature begins via coding, which is a way of analytically categorizing data into simple or complex codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). However, this categorization of data is not straightforward, as it should link themes to draw and verify conclusions in order to understand the phenomenon as well as for theory-building purposes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Seidel & Kelle, 1995).

I employed the content analysis strategy used by Gioia and Pitre (1990) by attempting multiple analyses with the data to develop first order, second order and aggregate dimensions. My data analysis consisted of five stages of data organizing, case descriptions, developing first and second order codes and aggregate dimensions (Gioia, Corlet & Hamilton, 2013). Data analysis is the result of continuous data iteration and back and forth movements between data and theory (Gioia et al., 2013; Marshall and Rossman, 2014).

Step 1 Data Organizing and Transcribing

For this dissertation, interview material and additional material were organized, coded and analyzed using the NVivo 10 software package. NVivo 10 helped in the rigorous and systematic coding process through different levels of coding, such as open coding, sub-codes, the relationship between codes, and so forth (Bazeley, 2007). The study was developed in two steps, i.e., within-case analysis followed by cross-case analyses. Two-step analysis was an iterative cyclical process of working with data, going back to the theory, and then coming back to the data, which has been suggested and explained by many scholars when using qualitative methodologies (e.g., Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Coffey, Beverley & Paul, 1996).
Step 2: Constructing the Case Description

In the next step, case descriptions of the cases were constructed. This was undertaken based on the empirical fieldwork, the interview materials that were transcribed and other secondary data. These sources of data rendered it possible to maintain rich data (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Pettigrew, 1990). The purpose of constructing case descriptions was to create a background understanding of each case that allowed me to identify emerging themes in each case (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the first step, I identified the profiles and background of entrepreneurs, and the background to the business concept and business model. In the first phase of data collection I was able to obtain general information on how the entrepreneurs came up with their initial idea and how the idea was further developed until the current status of the business. During the second phase of data collection, via a series of interviews the entrepreneurs provided more detailed information on the process of resource search, including the resources mobilized, the challenges faced, local business conditions, and so on. From the interview input, I further reconstructed the description of actions in as much detail as possible, as well as the ways in which the entrepreneurs performed these actions. The interviews conducted during the third phase of data collection provided insightful information regarding the sequences of actions leading to resource mobilization activities. These materials were detailed in the case descriptions. The case descriptions were updated after each phase of data collection to capture the details of the process in each case as far as possible. During the process of constructing the case descriptions, the interview materials and the case descriptions were compared and contrasted, and I re-read these descriptions several times to make sure that the details provided in the descriptions were accurate. The case descriptions provide the reader with an informative story that lays the foundations for the next chapter discussing cross-case analysis.

Step 3: Developing Codes

In the second step, I analyzed each case to identify activities relevant to entrepreneurial resource mobilization. I started the case analysis by reading the interview transcripts, case descriptions, and information obtained from the secondary sources, as well as listening to the interview audio files. I identified activities in depth that contributed to the development of the entrepreneurial resource base by reading the case descriptions, transcripts, and secondary sources. In each case, these texts were highlighted and copied in NVivo 11 of primary codes that indicated the relevant activities leading to resource mobilization among the entrepreneurs studied.

First, some prior codes reflecting the themes of the interview guide were created, i.e., thematic coding. This is a deductive way of creating themes from the guide and is especially helpful when we have multiple participants, as in the
Method

current study (Lapadat, 2009). However, mostly owing to continually reviewing and going back and forth between the literature, theory, coded data, cases, and analysis formed a really interesting intellectual exercise that helped in the continuous evolution of themes through induction, analysis and interpretation (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1990). The first cycle of coding started with themes based on the interview guide, and the second cycle allowed for the coding scheme to emerge through iteration and analysis.

In the second stage of coding, an open coding and attribute coding technique was used. Open coding helps in categorizing raw textual data, while attribute coding (as the name indicates) includes the attributes of samples (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Attribute coding displayed factual information of the sample cases including gender, name and size. These themes were coded and sub-coded again to identify patterns and linkages between cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These categories from the second cycle were those that added a new dimension and direction from the prior codes. This refining of codes was extremely helpful in the construction of analysis and defining theoretical choices. My starting point before going to the field was to consider formal entrepreneurs empirically and to search for evidence of bricolage and improvisation as the only resource-related practices. However, through these iterations on data and coding cycles, the theoretical choices shifted to a broader perspective as entrepreneurial resource mobilization. Moreover, informal entrepreneurs also emerged as a key part of the study. I developed codebooks, as they ensured transparency, consistency and constant refinement of data. The codebooks were maintained in NVivo and included the name, abbreviation, description, and definition of each code. Through this process and maintenance of codebooks, I added open, attribute and thematic codes. These codes were sorted, keeping in mind the themes and categories originating from data analysis. In the second cycle, the relationships between codes, data and cases were explored through NVivo to develop themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This iteration was conducted in cycles until some thematic saturation was achieved at the coding stage (Eisenhardt, 1989). I evaluated all of the themes of the cross-case second-order codes by using the relevant literature. I went back and forth between the themes and the literature and returned to the interview transcripts to re-read and find additional evidence for each theme in each case (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The table 6, 7 and 8 below illustrates the codes and categories developed in the codebook using multiple sources of data. This excerpt from the codebook shows the development of the code cultural commodification from one case, Revelations. The code was developed from data collected (interview, Facebook, photographs, archives), existing literature on resource mobilization, and especially commodification. Existing literature on commodification refers to the commodification of the material and physical beauty of a locality, but in this case the commodification of culture is more evident. Hira started the trend of affordable events for young people, by bringing cultural traditions. Truck art themes, affordable lunches for two instead of lavish events, using farmhouses
and public parks for arranging small events, homemade desserts, and traditional gatherings like committee events all reflected a revival of traditional cultural events, alongside affordable and bold events. For this, I relied on concepts in the social sciences in which cultural commodification is considered a valid concept. Looking into theoretical generalizations allowed me to borrow explanations from other theories, i.e., the transferability of results (Yin, 1994).

Table 6 Cross-Case First Order Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within-Case First Order Codes</th>
<th>Cross-Case First Order Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business as a hobby.</td>
<td>No special efforts for resource gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family responsibilities are more important.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relying on family network.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wealthy background.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term Project based collaborations.</td>
<td>Control progress towards resource scarcity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relying on personal finances, immediate contacts.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource constraints are addressed as reaction, i.e, demand for resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive resource development and search for resources.</td>
<td>Develop own resource base, independent business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant search for new opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quit parallel job to work full-time on the business.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking forward to collaborations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events proposal and new projects for the audience in the offseason.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for demands, trends, and themes in public.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search to know about the market and clients.</td>
<td>Information search.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice and mentoring helped in accessing networks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of business and market is central to successful business management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings.</td>
<td>Personal efforts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jobs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduced expenses, e.g., utility bills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends.</td>
<td>Immediate personal networks to access resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advice, guidance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social legitimacy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-based offices.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within-Case First Order Codes</th>
<th>Cross-Case First Order Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers.</td>
<td>Competitors and connections to access resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, raw material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful contacts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Interactions among networks become necessary for trustworthy relations.  
- Sharing of resources depend upon verbal contracts and everyone works with responsibility.  
- The main principle in collaborations is trust that binds collaborations together even in absence of written contracts.

### Recycling used material.
- Providing training on event venues in the absence of professional institutes.  
- Re-use existing resources as they have unique qualities, such as heritage, a story, a history, or special spirit attached to them.  
- Knowledge of local, cheap substitute resources.  
- How to convert old and undeveloped resources into new materials.  
- Traditional technology to new uses, e.g., wireless communication.

### Cultural heritage.
- Natural local resource.  
- Scenic beauty.  
- Local norms and values, e.g., peace.

### Social capital used for resource access, information, employment generation, competitiveness, improved products, and services support the local economy through local sourcing, local food, local labor, etc.

### Informal social exchange of skilled labor, informal wage labor exchange, third party collaborations.

### Unregistered business activity to learn about business and market.
- Informal businesses to gather resources and develop repute in the market.  
- Testing of business ideas through informal ventures.
Table 7 Cross-Case Second Order Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-Case First Order Codes</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Second Order Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No special efforts for resource gathering. Business as a hobby. Control progress towards resource scarcity.</td>
<td>Lifestyle entrepreneurship (Ateljevic &amp; Doorne, 2000). Entrepreneur perceives resource constraints in order to determine that the situation demands making do with whatever resources are available (Baker &amp; Nelson, 2005).</td>
<td>Business goals, resource constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop own resource base, independent business.</td>
<td>Some entrepreneur in the constrained situation might perceive some form of resource munificence and pursue firm growth strategies (Edelman &amp; Yli-Renko, 2010).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal efforts</td>
<td>Personal resources capture behaviors related to conservative financial philosophies, bootstrapping (Bhide, 1992) and resource-seeking behaviors, like seeking good deals, careful spending, minimal expenses, etc. (Powell &amp; Baker, 2011, 7).</td>
<td>Personal resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate personal networks</td>
<td>Strong ties, such as having parents or close friends who owned businesses (Davidsson &amp; Honig, 2003).</td>
<td>Bonding social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Case First Order Codes</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>Second Order Codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitors and acquaintances to access resources</td>
<td>Weak ties are beneficial in tapping new information and opportunities (Burt, 2000; Davidsson &amp; Honig, 2003; Granovetter, 1973).</td>
<td>Bridging social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful contacts locally.</td>
<td>Linkages (Woolcock, 1998; Woolcock et al., 2000) and power structures and institutions to access unique resources and new ideas (Pretty, 2000).</td>
<td>Linking social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alertness to repurposing or reusing existing information resources.</td>
<td>Upcycling is the way of reusing and repurposing things that are otherwise considered waste; it is an important strategy for marginalized groups in developing countries (Baillie &amp; Foster, 2014).</td>
<td>Information upcycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills to commoditize immaterial resources.</td>
<td>Cultural commodification is an overlap of tradition and modernity in any society (O’Neill, 2005).</td>
<td>Cultural commodification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social capital as a forum of shared resources and interest</td>
<td>Social capital can be used as a forum for shared interest to promote venture and gain market share (Powell &amp; Baker, 2011).</td>
<td>Utilization of social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social exchange of labor, knowledge, and skills</td>
<td>Entrepreneurs will try to co-opt resources using informal social exchange terms (Starr &amp; McMillan, 1990).</td>
<td>Utilization of human capital</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 Aggregate Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Order Codes</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Aggregate Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business goals, Resource constraints</td>
<td>Perceived resource availability, which results from the set of actual or potential resources at one’s disposal (Bourgeois, 1981), relative to the perceived resource demand (Cohen, March, &amp; Olsen, 1972; George, 2005; Mishina, Pollock, &amp; Porac, 2004). Resource choice has significant implications for a venture’s survival and development, and many ventures fail each year as they cannot find appropriate resources (Brush et al., 2001). Entrepreneurial knowledge and identification of resources means a clear understanding of which resources are required (Pfeffer &amp; Salancik, 1978). Identification and knowledge of resources helps in finding information about the industry, market, clients, networks, trends, suppliers, competition, culture, heritage, etc. (Baker &amp; Nelson, 2005; Stathopoulou et al., 2004).</td>
<td>Recognition of resource needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal resources</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship is about the arrangement of resources (Foss &amp; Klien, 2008). Entrepreneurs may engage creatively in resource mobilization, using what is available or co-opting what is needed from others in their network (Baker &amp; Nelson, 2005; Starr &amp; MacMillian, 1990). Network relationships provide required resources to entrepreneurs at attractive terms, especially at the start of their ventures (Semrau &amp; Werner, 2014). For social capital to have a positive influence, the radius of trust should be larger and vice versa (Bhagavatula, 2009). Trust can include sharing useful information, developing a close bond and goodwill with a particular contact, and participating in important economic transactions (Hite, 2005).</td>
<td>Sharing of/access to resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding social capital, Bridging social capital, Linking social capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.12 Theoretical Understanding

Based on the cases, several patterns developed that supported entrepreneurial resource mobilization using networking theory. First, each case was analyzed, and the findings were compared across cases. The within-case analysis enabled the development of certain schemes that were evaluated across cases to see whether they were replicated across cases. I entered the study during Phase 1 of data collection with a focus on investigating bricolage in micro firms. However, my theoretical understanding changed substantially from bricolage to the broader study of entrepreneurial resource mobilization and from only micro-enterprises to informal micro entrepreneurs running micro enterprises. I found that the firms, I wanted to study were involved in complex resource mobilization activities rather than solely focusing on bricolage. In addition, informal entrepreneurship became another obvious theoretical issue that emerged from the data. Informal entrepreneurship is quite an obvious strategy for micro enterprises in Pakistan to enter the market. Therefore, I began conceptualizing entrepreneurial resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in Pakistan, adding more cases until I finished with 15 cases from an original eight. The iterative process of theory understanding started in the initial phase of data collection, resulting not only in the broadening of the theoretical concept but also the theoretical sample. Scholars suggest that the purpose of theory explanation is not to tell stories but to present tables and figures alongside the relevant text to facilitate theory development (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). I went back to the data, literature and theory to draw conclusions and verify appropriate findings.
5.12.1 Data Analysis and Interpretations (Thematic Saturation)

According to Stake (1995), analysis is a continuous process that can begin at first impression and continue until final compilations. Cases serve as empirical evidence to prove or disprove existing assumptions and to support or extend theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). Miles and Huberman (1994) explain the process of data analysis in three steps as data reduction, data display, and conclusions.

Data reduction is about generating themes and patterns from the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To reach new meanings about cases, two strategic ways exist: categorical aggregation and direct interpretation (Stake, 1995). I have already mentioned that I have both intrinsic and instrumental interest in cases, implying that I first directly interpreted instances from each case and allowed open and emerging themes to guide. Next, I compared the cases through categorical aggregation, where I gathered similar instances across cases to make one theme. This search for meaning is often undertaken through patterns that are also termed ‘correspondence’ (Stake, 1995). This sense of correspondence is important for understanding and analyzing data, as it allows for the iteration of data by going back and forth through collected data in an episodic manner to create codes. During this cross-case synthesis, I generated tables where possible (Yin, 2009) as a means of identifying common features among cases that would facilitate comparisons and display data. Good data display includes tables and figures that can simplify conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used tables and quotations, wherever relevant at different stages of coding and analysis. Data display included Excel sheets and tables, and cross-case supported relationships and comparisons between different findings. In the findings chapter (Chapter 6), reduced data are displayed. Data reduction occurred after continuous refinement and consultation of the data, theoretical literature and supervisor and peer guidance. This process continued until I achieved thematic saturation (Bowen, 2008).

5.13 Ensuring Quality in the Research Process

Qualitative study faces the challenge of proving its trustworthiness and credibility to ensure quality and rigor (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2009). To ensure trustworthiness in qualitative studies, Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest looking for reliability, objectivity, and internal and external validity. Reliability refers to the degree to which results are dependable and consistent over time (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It also includes the thoroughness of data documentation (Yin et al., 2013). The techniques used to perform iterative and multiple within- and cross-case analysis, multiple sources of data, discussion and feedback from peers ensured constant evaluation. This constant evaluation and
feedback improved the reliability and consistency of the themes and concepts. Data collection was conducted in phases, with additional cases used to help improve reliability. Objectivity is the point to which a researcher’s subjectivity influences data collection and analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Even though I received feedback and guideline from peers (supervisors, researchers and colleagues), data collection, coding and transcription were performed by me, opening up the potential for bias and subjectivity. To counter this bias, datasets were maintained through NVivo, thus allowing me to return to the data and previous steps of data analysis. I developed codebooks, and all data sources were saved in NVivo to increase objectivity. The study does not aim to infer causal relationships and is qualitative. The obvious limitation is that there are no strict boundaries on controlling the concepts of the study. Nevertheless, the investigation employed multiple sources of data to improve understanding of the phenomenon and to avoid research bias as far as possible. In order to enhance internal validity, a researcher can use multiple data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). People learn by receiving generalizations from authors, teachers, and even their own experiences (Stake, 1995). This process of generalizing from one’s own experience is termed ‘naturalistic generalization’ by Stake and Trumbull (1982), (cf Stake, 1995). Naturalistic generalization is a process whereby readers reflect on the details of the cases and gain knowledgeable insights. They recognize similarities between the cases and their experiences to warrant a generalization. Generalizations involve the transfer of knowledge from the sample under study to another population. Unlike in scientific generalizations, in naturalistic generalization, knowledge transfers from subjective accounts (cases). One possibility here is that the sample selected, while purposive, failed to represent all of the entrepreneurs in the selected region, as the study seeks analytic generalizations at the conceptual level (Yin, 1999), rather than statistical generalizations. The findings of this study could be generalizable at the conceptual level. To increase external validity, two factors are important: 1) this investigation used real-world entrepreneurs operating under real-world conditions; 2) Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest cross-case comparisons where possible to enhance external validity, and cross-case comparisons were duly made extensively in this study.

Following Yin (1994), analytical generalization refers to generalizing the emerging results and interpretations of existing theory rather than a whole population of cases. For analytic generalization, previous theory serves as a template to compare findings from case studies and allow for theoretical support. Comparison between theory and findings allows for new concepts to be suggested by drawing comparisons between emergent findings and existing theory, as well as facilitating transferability and theoretical generalization. However, transferability relies on qualitative data quality and rigor (Van de Ven, 2007). In conclusion, I agree with Nordqvist (2005) that developing theoretical concepts from case studies is an effective means of providing analytical generalizations that either support or contest previous theory and suggest new
ways of seeing and understanding what is being studied. For this study, the generalizations that the reader might receive operate both in the context of resource-constrained informal entrepreneurs and emerging and informal economies. Globally, young micro enterprises are more likely to fail than succeed and are considered to be more vulnerable to environmental pressures and constraints. In this regard, exploration and understanding of the process of entrepreneurial resource mobilization might have implications for young micro enterprises in different contexts. In addition, the context of the study, Pakistan, is a developing country, and understanding of entrepreneurship in emerging economies is required to bring new theoretical insights as well as develop productive entrepreneurship in countries with more or less similar economies.

5.14 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has outlined the main methodological choices for conducting this research. The primary purpose revolved around the understanding of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. The philosophical standpoints were connected to a pragmatic perspective with a qualitative, abductive research design. Multiple case design was selected as real-life interventions were explored (Yin, 1999). The focus of the level of analysis was both at the firm and entrepreneur level, alongside explanation of their experiences and social realities in order to extend debate regarding entrepreneurial resource mobilization. Moreover, the unit of analysis constituted entrepreneurial activities. In order to ensure rigor in analysis and generalizations, multiple sources of data are considered crucial not only in terms of quality but also ethically in order to avoid misrepresentations and misunderstandings. All of the cases were picked from the event planning industry in Pakistan. Although small firms in this industry in Pakistan have mushroomed in recent years, the sample size was 15, as analytic rather than statistical generalization was intended from the sample. Moreover, Yin (1999) considers both uniqueness and depth crucial for case analyses. This single setting of the event planning industry of Pakistan was selected intentionally to examine the dynamism and uniqueness involved in defining entrepreneurial resource mobilization within the selected cases. Thus, in-depth examination of cases and the dynamics present in single and unique setting (Eisenhardt, 1989) was prioritized. Data collection was attempted in phases for two years. The challenges involved in such a research approach comprise different steps (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). I investigated the previous relevant research to justify and undertake this study. In order to fulfill the conditions of theoretical sampling, cases from the event planning industry were selected intentionally, as the majority of the entrepreneurs in this industry were informal or semi-formal and also relatively recent, rendering it easier to observe different activities and their evolution with formal and informal structures, thus highlighting and extending the logic and connection among constructs (Eisenhardt & Graebner,
The next step of data collection was primarily based on semi-structured interviews, although other sources included websites, social media pages, and documents. Participants were diverse in terms of gender, education, profile, size, and age of firms. Indeed, the sample’s diversity offered rich data with sufficient qualitative details of each case. Interviews were conducted in three phases from August 2013 to October 2015. Other sources such as policy documents addressing governance issues, registration, and property rights consideration about small firms were also reviewed before conducting the interviews. An interview guide with relevant issues was prepared in advance. Snowball sampling was used to identify relevant cases. To understand the entrepreneurial activities in the field in question, some entrepreneurs who had left the industry were also interviewed. The sample’s mix facilitated a strong understanding of the execution of events and the challenges and opportunities faced by informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry in Pakistan.
6. Overview of Cases

This chapter presents case descriptions which are a prerequisite for understanding informal entrepreneurs’ activities as they organize resources for their businesses. The research was conducted in Pakistan, so all the 15 cases are from that country. Each case starts with the profile of the entrepreneurs who established the business. The details show how these entrepreneurs developed/failed in their informal ventures. The chapter ends with concluding remarks.

Case 1: Royale Event Management

Royale Event Management is a wedding planner owned by Hammad and his friend Bilal who informally started it in 2008. The idea of starting an event planning business struck Bilal when Hammad was getting married. Bilal discussed the idea of doing wedding planning as a side business with Hammad. Hammad was very excited because he always wanted to have his own business. His attempts at running a call center and an interior decoration business had failed. Bilal and Hammad were both working at that time. They arranged a few events but were not successful, so they took a break for six months. After six months, they arranged a wedding for their friend on an informal basis. This went well, and they also got a few offers and made some clients in the first two years. The process of arranging events was quite slow as they had no resource base and they could not give all their time to the business because of their jobs.

6.1 Resource Mobilization in Royale

6.1.1 Resource Identification

According to Bilal, identifying resources is a very subjective process that can only be guided by personal experience. Royale Event Management is a result of the experience that the partners gained over time.

"Event planning is not just a skill. It is a venture which means that we have to be aware of not only our personal strengths and weaknesses, but we also need to have thorough knowledge of the market, resources and competitors" (Bilal).

Bilal and Hammad said that event planning is not just about arranging events, but it is predominantly about different ways of identifying resources using experience, knowledge and information. Information helps in locating networks, new ideas and markets which can be tapped.
"In the start, we had only market knowledge and information but over the years we have learned through our experience about what is right and what is not and how much we need to spend and invest in a given situation" (Hammad).

Bilal said that searching for appropriate resources for the business is crucial:

“We tried to be creative within our cost limits and tried to provide the best services considering our client's request and financial viability. Our client’s market us and our social networks usually provide us with new projects. This was especially true when we started.”

It is necessary for entrepreneurs to be creative with their products and services and this demands more human resources, training and skills. Creativity in products and services is critical because of intellectual property rights as there is no copyright law in Pakistan. All the designs and ideas can be copied and even marketed in anyone else's name. This not only affects quality but also influences how businesses are developed.

"A business done with creativity can lead to success but still after all these years we need to be well informed about new concepts and ideas otherwise our survival will be a big question mark. We try to bring new creative décor and ideas for all our events. This is possible as we are always gathering information on new trends, demands and needs" (Hammad).

Bilal also mentioned that ignoring local mindsets is not easy because they did not have proper marketing strategies.

“We need to dig into the local mentality for our business' development. People here spend a lot on anything but not on event planning. However, they need the best quality service for which they do not regard our efforts.”

During the pre-startup phase, Bilal and Hammad realized the kind of resources that they would need for their event planning business. According to Hammad, Royale was a dream that came true. After a few informal event planning experiences, he realized that event planning needed full-time commitment and could not be run as a side business. He said:

"I had collected all the information and I decided that the day I had six months' reserve money I would leave my job. I told my boss, but he was against this as he said that leaving the job was not the right decision. He offered money and asked me not to leave the job but I knew if I did not believe in myself nobody else would, so I left the job the day I had saved six months' salary.”

In the later stages, that is, right after starting, Royale relied on collaborations with other competitors to provide raw material, labor and necessary skills. For them third-party collaborations were a convenient arrangement in exchange for certain rental costs.

The primary source for information for executing an event is personal interactions. The main strategy that Royale follows is arranging private meetings with clients or people who are a potential source of information. Personal communication is also a way of establishing contact and expanding Royale's network. Before having this personal interaction, the Royale team collects valuable and necessary information through the internet or by studying previous records. Resource identification, however, has many constraints.
6.1.2 Resource Gathering

6.1.2.1 Informal Social Support

In its early years, help was provided by employer Ovex Technologies where both Bilal and Hammad worked in the night shift. Their boss Faisal Khan knew that they were working on a side business in the daytime, so he gave them flexible hours in the night shift.

6.1.2.2 Collaborations

For the first four years, Royale worked through third-party collaborations and only used its name. The third-party arranged all resources and Royale launched and used these resources creatively for an event. This involvement of the third party lowered profit margins so Royale decided to build its resource base to increase its profits.

Royale has good collaborations with daily wage labor as they can be required at any time to transport the products and set the stage and flooring. Discussing the resource base for Royale, Bilal said that building a human resource base in an event business is the most difficult as event management relies on temporary and informal labor for putting up an event. He said:

"Managing labor is the trickiest part because for an event the most tiresome job is creating a setup which is usually done during the day. Usually we have to dismantle the set up late at night when the function ends. You need to take it off and mostly at that point, many problems arise between the management and labor. Labor frequently switches because of these issues so it is not only arrangements or resources or ideas that you have to use but human resources as well, so we believe in strong and fair collaborations."

On these lines, Hammad also mentioned that:

"I left my job because event planning cannot be run as a side business as you have to manage operational staff and labor all the time and this is not possible if you are not available full time for your business."

Royale believes that every event planning business should know its specialty. Royale was a success because Hammad was very careful in determining the market. They knew from the start that an enormous market was waiting for event planning in 2008. There were not enough event planning businesses at that time. So, when they started, they did not face much competition.

"You would have noticed that many event planning businesses are mushrooming now but many of them will exit soon because we have observed over the years that new entrepreneurs come solely because of their gut feeling or confidence but they lack information about labor, pricing, management and time management and that is critical for the long-term survival of any business" (Bilal).
6.1.3 Resource Utilization

At first, Bilal and Hammad were quite disheartened as they did not have a resource base for launching their business. Then they thought of using a middleman to provide them with the resources and the inventory for arranging events instead of investing their own money. In the first two years when they got only a few clients and organized a few events, they started their event firm in the name Royale Wedding Planners. They had no resources, or a proper office and the middleman arranged everything. This middleman had his event planning firm which provided Royale all the physical resources and inventory, but Royale was on the front using its own name and providing services as if it owned all the resources and stock. Royale made a profile on Facebook and launched its website. Until then, Royale was only targeting family and friends for events to get more experience and to establish its name. After two years when Royale got a few clients, Hammad started looking after Royale full time. The name Royale Wedding Planners was changed to Royale Event Planners as the company extended its focus from weddings to corporate events and private organizations. Royale did events for embassies and fashion companies for the first four years till 2012. After gaining this experience and establishing its name as an event planner, Royale entered into clothing and interior designing in 2013. In 2014, it bought its own godown (storage house) and now it owns flooring setups, human resources, furniture and decorations and can arrange events for 500 to 1,000 people with its own resources. Bilal is part of Royale Event Planners as an informal managerial member and more as Hammad’s friend. However, Hammad has left his job and is working full-time with Royale and owns and manages the company completely and alone.

Hammad said, “Royale is everything because of its thorough market knowledge. We have seen that micro and small-sized firms that enter the event planning business commit to services without any market knowledge and they cannot deliver them. We have never made wrong commitments because you are everything in the market because of your service.” Lacking market knowledge is a dangerous thing for any business’ health. Both Hammad and Bilal shared different instances where they faced problems when they were not aware of labor wages, costs and benefits. Now Royale is a big name in the business. By concentrating on the wedding niche, it is benefiting from word of mouth publicity and referrals. Now it is also trying to open up other potential segments like fashion shows. Royale is now among the top-5 wedding event companies in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Bilal and Hammad want to grow and develop their wedding events profile nationally. Clients are the most important part of Royale events and customer satisfaction is its primary mission.

“To achieve customer satisfaction, Royale uses its information and human resources efficiently. It aims to work on quality, creativity and time management. “In the past, we did events in which we were not able to put the stage or venue in time and our clients were upset but we have learned our lessons now that if clients need everything at 17, we make it ready at 16, so they can review and accept it” (Hammad).
Bilal also said that client demographics are important for Royale events as they make them understand the industry position, growth potential, customer trends and relevant economic indicators. Sometimes demographics also allow them to set the budget for the whole event.

"People in Pakistan do not disclose their budgets for events and it's a big challenge for us and for all event planners as clients ask for a stage décor for two lakh PKR but they want to pay 50,000 PKR and that is not possible for us so we try to discuss with them and get to know their profile first. Then we give them options accordingly, so we should be well informed of the demographics of our clients to assess the right choices and right budgets” (Bilal).

It’s paramount to follow society. Royale is careful about the cultural and religious trends in society. For example, Muharram and Ramzan are very sacred religious months in Pakistan, so they avoid many functions at that time.

“We follow trends in society. We have around 125 events in a year but for Ramzan and Muharram we do no work” (Hammad). Giving another example Bilal said, “People do events on Milad and make stages in Rabi-ul-Awal, but we do not do that because we have not done such events before and we do not want to deceive our clients so we just do not work in these months. These are just off-season for us” (Bilal).

6.1.4 Case Summary

Royale Events Management was started informally in 2008 with the intention of developing and staying in business in the long-term. To survive in the event planning business, Hammad assessed that if he saved 6-months’ salary he could survive in the event industry for good. The resource constraints identified by Hammad mainly had to do with financial capability and capacity (Table 9). Before the startup phase, finances were identified as the biggest constraint, therefore, Hammad started working on saving his salary. His 6-month salary was used for setting up an office in his home basement and for developing a website. He also met his personal expenses through these savings. After this step he was able to leave his job and focus on Royale full time. Addressing capability and capacity constraints were next on the list. Hammad and Bilal realized that with their low resource base they could not execute quality events. So, they decided to go in for collaborations with other competitor event planners who were established in the market. With this arrangement they arranged resources in the early years of the startup. Through these collaborations, they arranged manpower, labor, raw material and venues. This arrangement worked for two years and during this period Royale started developing its own resource base. Now Royale is an established event planner which provides similar collaborations to new entrants who are facing resource constraints. However, it still promotes collaborations for venues and labor for meeting capacity and capability constraints.
### Overview of Cases

**Table 9 Resource Mobilization in Royale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
<td>Cash, office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Gathering</td>
<td>Hamad saved 6-months’ salary</td>
<td>Set up his office in his home basement. Website development. Personal family expenses. Left his job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor.</td>
<td>Pre-startup phase, market research to know trends and demands of the local public.</td>
<td>Knowledge used for identifying relatively stable event planning firms that could provide the required labor and skills or arrange an event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start up informal. Third-party collaborations to arrange for required labor.</td>
<td>Collaborations with competitors provided low labor and the skills to arrange floor setups and event designing, keeping Royale on the front. Used their resource base for providing third-party collaborations to new entrants. Used third-party collaborations as a tool to provide event planning training through its first-hand knowledge and experience and for earning money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early years later survival. Invested profits in developing own resource base for the first two years, for example, labor, raw materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw materials, venues.</td>
<td>Third-party collaborations. Personal savings, redefined personal resources.</td>
<td>All furniture and décor arrangements were provided collaborations. Collaborations with marquee owners providing venues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 2: Occasions

Occasions is an event planning firm informally started by three partners in 2011. It was registered in 2012. Rizwan, Basit and Arsalan were already running a company, Prolific Solutions together when they started Occasions. Prolific Solutions is an IT based company providing hardware and software services. Their entrepreneurial experience with Prolific Solutions gave the three partners strong basics in marketing and selling. Based on their good reputation they were approached to set up a cricket match in Rawalpindi in 2011 which they accepted. Rizwan and his friends later started organizing events formally under a separate company, Occasions. In the early years, Occasions focused on public social events like raising awareness for thalassemia, arranging national women’s championships and tennis tournaments. Later they started focusing on wedding events and now they are known for wedding events. Rizwan admitted that organizing weddings was not their strength in the early years of business development. However, Occasions started with strong knowledge about the market and with a willingness to develop their event planning business.

6.2 Resource Mobilization in Occasions

The main challenges that led to resource mobilization, as mentioned by one of the partners, were getting investments and being up to date.

"The main problem for us is that we need to be up to date in the event planning field. This is the main thing to survive and we bring new ideas and creativity to attract customers."

"People do not have a mindset here to invest in a business and this is a challenge for boosting entrepreneurship in Pakistan."

6.2.1 Resource Identification

In its early years, Occasions arranged events under the name Prolific Solutions which had a strong reputation in the IT sector. But after a few events, the entrepreneurial team faced a situation in which they realized that they needed to have a separate event planning firm.

Rizwan said:

“When we started working in the event planning field, customers demanded a proper way of doing things. You know we were working in the company Prolific Solutions with the slogan ‘possibilities’ that was not going with the event planning field.”

Arsalan and Rizwan started looking for more information and solutions to this situation. Soon they found that an entrepreneur wanted to exit his business and wanted to sell his running event planning firm called Occasions. So Arsalan and Rizwan decided to buy Occasions in 2012.

They said:
Overview of Cases

“Thanks to our events experience we already knew that we needed a serious approach for the event planning business. We did not have any name and did not have any resources, so we went for Occasions.”

With the acquisition of the new firm the owners shifted their geographic focus to Islamabad, Lahore and other cities in the Punjab. Thanks to their experience, they had information and ideas about which markets they should enter. There were many instances where interpersonal sources like friends and family members were contacted to satisfy their information needs to seek advice or support in different situations. Rizwan’s father is an experienced entrepreneur and is running his own business. Rizwan and his partners arranged informal meetings with Rizwan’s father regularly to get advice and guidance based on his experience.

The Occasions team believes in discussions among the partners before taking major decisions. This social component guides them in taking appropriate decisions. Gaining experience and necessary relevant skills are also important in understanding the event planning field and for researching the right information. A collaboration with Monal in the form of Rizwan’s job is one such step. Rizwan said:

“I have got a lot of information on how to run live kitchens in events. Food is most important for customers because if the food is not good a customer or guests are not happy, so I am learning about how we can give a boost to Occasions to attract customers.”

6.2.2  Resource Gathering

6.2.2.1  Informal Social Support

Occasions is a result of support from family and friends. Rizwan and Arsalan were working together in Prolific. Basit had a separate IT business, and he joined Rizwan and Arsalan four years after Prolific was established. Then the three of them decided to start Occasions together as partners. They pooled their resources from Prolific and started this company. Besides Rizwan’s family was also a big support.

“My father supported me in starting this business. He gave me all the finances to establish our office and after I got married my wife supports me through thick and thin” (Rizwan).

6.2.2.2  Collaborations

Occasions enjoys a good reputation among its competitors in the local market. Competition for Occasions is just another reason for maintaining quality. Otherwise, Occasions has established good relations with its competitors to manage its resource base.

“We do not see our competitors as our ‘enemies.’ Instead we are very well connected with our competitors. We provide them with the resources that they need, and we get the resources from them for our events.”
One good example of this resourceful strategy is Occasions’ collaboration with Monal.

Occasions arranges its resources on its own now. Rizwan is doing an extra job in Monal (a famous 4-star hotel in Pakistan) and Arsalan and Basit run Prolific Solutions.

“I am doing another job in Monal as an event planner for different reasons. I want to gain experience in the event planning business and second the salary I get is for my personal use as the salaries we (partners) get in Occasions are invested in the company” (Rizwan).

6.2.2.3 Personal Efforts

Occasions is constantly trying to be resourceful and self-sufficient. For this, all partners work 13-14 hours a day. They work for Occasions on a daily basis for around 8 hours on average but also do side jobs and businesses to arrange resources. Rizwan works in business development while Basit and Arsalan lead the sales and management teams respectively. Rizwan operates from an office in Islamabad while Arsalan and Basit are based in Rawalpindi. The Islamabad office is mainly for Monal’s event planners but since Rizwan is also working for Monal, he uses it for both Occasions and Monal’s work.

Another resourceful strategy is that all partners do not share profits from every event, but they do it after every three months. From that profit, 40 percent is invested in Occasions and 60 percent is shared equally by the three partners.

6.2.3 Resource Utilization

Occasions is a result of a pool of diversified information that Rizwan, Arsalan and Basit had. All of them had entrepreneurial experience. Arsalan and Basit had experience in the IT industry and Rizwan was running his father’s toys and sports accessories business. Then Prolific Solutions gave them information about market segments, business procedures and management. This information helped them lead their event planning business. The main sources of information for Occasions are personal interactions and networking with stakeholders like Monal, competitors, labor and clients.

When Rizwan and his team purchased Occasions, it was a very risky decision because Occasions was banned in different places because of its questionable reputation in the twin cities. However, they went for this risky purchase because they wanted to have an inventory and resource base at a nominal cost. Afterward, the ban was lifted because of the quality and standards of its new management.

Occasions’ mission is addressing social issues prevailing in the local society. For this it arranges charity events on a regular basis. For example, it arranges women’s empowerment events and thalassemia events to create awareness. Another mission is addressing the unemployment issue in Pakistan. The job market is quite competitive and tough in Pakistan and the partners want to solve this problem by hiring educated labor formally as their ventures grow.
Occasions’ special focus is on following clients’ demands and needs. The main strategy that it follows is holding daily meetings on event themes, stage décor, flowers, colors and quality. These meetings continue till the clients are satisfied and give all the order details. After this the client is offered a visit to the venue with the management team where it explains everything about how the event will be set up. Budgets are asked at the very end of these meetings if the client himself does not disclose them earlier. This is to gain a client’s trust and confidence in Occasion’s profile. Often meetings are also conducted at the client's home, which is not a norm in the local market.

"Our clients are very important to us. These are mostly ladies in our local market segment who do not like to come to our office so usually we go to their homes for 4-5 meetings to find out their demands. Meeting clients privately and frequently costs more time, but it is worth it for getting all the important information and details about our clients."

People have a mindset that they usually want to spend less and try to get the best options at low costs. However, following the clients closely allows Occasions to gain their trust and then they come up with right budgets.

### 6.2.4 Case Summary

Occasions is an event planning firm that was started in 2011. Occasions has three partners who were already running an IT solutions firm, Prolific Solutions. Table 10 gives Occasions’ resource mobilization activities. Rizwan and his team stated arranging various sports events using Prolific Solutions’ profile. After a few successful events they thought that they should venture into event planning. They bought an already established firm, Occasions from another event planner who was exiting his business. To meet financial constraints, Rizwan arranged for a 50,000 PKR loan from his father. The rest of the finances were arranged through personal savings and resources from Prolific Solutions with which they purchased Occasions. The main constraints were poor skills and labor. In the start all the skills and manpower were provided by the partners themselves. They hired informal labor to arrange and set up events. Later Occasions started long-term ongoing collaborations for venues, marketing, event planning and catering.
Table 10 Resource Mobilization in Occasions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
<td>Resource Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>Got a loan of 50,000 PKR from Rizwan’s father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pooling of resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td><strong>Pre-startup phase,</strong> market research to know trends and demands among the local public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Startup informal,</strong> At the time of purchasing, Occasions had a bad reputation among the public because of commitments not kept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skills and labor in early years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Early years after survival, third-party collaborations with Monal to earn proper event planning experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Overview of Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></th>
<th><strong>Raw materials, office.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Personal savings.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Used personal savings earned from Prolific Solutions to invest in Occasions.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasions was purchased from another event planner who was exiting the business. With the purchase of Occasions, the partners had good raw material and a resource base. Occasions lacks venues for events.</td>
<td>All furniture, décor arrangements were got by purchasing an existing event planning venture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With a collaboration with Monal, Occasions has easy access to Monal’s marquee clients at discounted rates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 3: Miradore

Miradore Weddings is part of Miradore Productions. Miradore Productions was established in 2007. It has three partners, Tipu, Adeel and Abdul Rehman. Miradore Productions executes commercial events, corporate events and conferences. Miradore Weddings is solely for wedding events. Of the three partners, Tipu is a mechanical engineer by profession. He had a few work-related incidents which disappointed him, and he started thinking about starting his own business. He joined an event management company for gaining experience and to learn how to run an event planning business. Afterward, he started his business. Adeel and Abdul Rehman joined him later. Adeel was working in a call center and also doing his MBA from Quaid-e-Azam University (Islamabad). Adeel was very active in the university’s event management efforts. Adeel met Tipu when he was arranging a concert for the university. Both shared their mutual interest in organizing an event together, and that is how Adeel joined Tipu. Later Abdul Rehman joined the business team as a partner and they started Miradore Productions. In 2010 they started Miradore Weddings with sole focus on wedding events.

6.3 Resource Mobilization in Miradore

6.3.1 Resource Identification

To arrange resources for Miradore Weddings, Miradore used resources like raw materials, labor and the creative concept team from Miradore Productions. Miradore did not have real financial problems when it ventured into Miradore Weddings, but it identified the need of having good network relations in the market. The partners prefer good business and social relations with stakeholders. Miradore is known for its creativity and personalization. Its managerial team believes in customized weddings. This is only possible by following a well-organized information seeking behavior.

“One should have an eye for detail. Another thing is being composed and organized in managing all the details” (Tipu).

Miradore also interacts a lot with both potential and actual clients. So, it has Facebook pages to spread information. It also saves all client data.

The Miradore team mentions the importance of resource accumulation frequently and that entrepreneurs should be aware of government policies and the challenges for entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Resources to start and develop businesses in Pakistan are not easily available and even running a business is not easy. Some examples mentioned by them were copyright issues, government corruption and clients’ demands. Informality poses extra challenges which makes searching for resources and finding suitable conditions challenging.
Copyright is a big issue in the event planning industry in Pakistan.

"If we take some inspiration then we personalize it and change it according to our client and event's demand but if we do not change and use it as it is then we tell our clients that this is not our idea and we got inspired by US or Canada. But in the business industry in Pakistan you do not observe this ethical practice as people take credit for other people's ideas. This is a big challenge" (Adeel).

Matching client’s perceptions and expectations is another big challenge.

“Everything is discussed orally. Clients are usually not clear about what they want. For example, once a lady asked for magenta color. Everything was finalized, but she had no idea that magenta color would look different in the daytime so when she visited the site in the daytime she said change everything this is not what I want but then we calmed her and sent her back. She came back in the evening and was happy that yes you were right this is what she had asked for and if we had changed something. And we answered no bad not so it's a big challenge, and you know in this business only the client is right” (Adeel).

On the corporate side, corruption is a challenge. Sometimes people in power can put pressure and also threaten to get free tickets for concerts or other public events.

"In the start, we were scared of all this but not anymore. If someone calls for a free pass and says that otherwise we will not be allowed to go ahead with the event and says that he is calling from the 'President' or the 'Minister's' office we just say yes please do what you want to do we do not care, no more threats” (Tipu).

"Delayed payments for corporate events are a challenge because our labor and vendors do not wait for our delayed payments and this can affect our reputation, service quality and network so pretty much everything. It is that risky" (Tipu).

### 6.3.2 Resource Gathering

#### 6.3.2.1 Collaborations

Miradore has a strategy of maintaining strong relations with its vendors, laborers and clients (both private and corporate). “Event planning is not a one-man show. We need a pool of resources and skills, so our strategy is that we pay our vendors and labor right after we finish an event even if we have a loss. We pay them from our own pocket and in return we get a loyal team that is always willing to provide quality service” (Adeel).

Competitors are not seen as a threat but as fellow workers in the market. So good relations are managed with competitors as well.

"We know that most of our competitors are copying our ideas and concepts, but we do not mind that. Some of them come to our venues and even take pictures. We never discourage them because for us it is a way to keep up with the market and see our strength and worth in the industry. For us, they are another source of information to check our rankings and positioning in the market" (Tipu).

The Miradore team shared details about a critical event that was stationed internationally. The Miradore team wanted to do a venture internationally, but they just went there without any resource estimations. This turned out to be a
failure and they returned with empty pockets. However, the managerial team took it as a lesson and has not given up. It wants to go on such adventures again but of course no jumping into experimentation without getting collaborations with networks and detailed information on the new market, segments, client and trends.

6.3.2.2 Personal Efforts

Miradore was started with Tipu, Adeel and later Abdul Rehman’s personal savings. The three of them are partners in Miradore Productions, and they did not seek any financial help from their families or friends and nor did they take any loan or credit.

All of them were doing jobs and this is how they saved money which they invested in Miradore Productions. For Miradore Weddings, they did not have anything at the start, but they just took the risk and accepted one wedding order because of their reputation for holding corporate events. For this wedding, resources were arranged solely from the payment they received in advance and so Miradore Wedding’s journey started.

6.3.3 Resource Utilization

Miradore’s success lies in the information that it has about the event industry. This information is not just limited to gathering it but also using it efficiently. This experience of information seeking and using brought valuable experience to the Miradore team, which helps in evaluating everyday decisions and plans.

"Experience is everything and not just experience in one particular skill but managing the whole event. With experience one can visualize what is right and what is not" Adeel.

"People come to this field and start buying things. They do no research. We have seen people who have bought things without any prior information and taken orders for events. What happens is that they end up buying an inventory for 10 lakh PKR that can easily be arranged in 4 lakh PKR so experiencing and researching in this field before committing to anything is central. I did the same before starting my own company back in 2007 and I do extensive research regularly even now after all these years" (Tipu).

Miradore incurred losses on many occasions in commercial events. For example, the company arranged a concert for the international singing band Accent from Romania. Everything was arranged but the singer missed the flight and Miradore faced a significant loss.

Tipu said:

"We suffered a loss because of our lack of information about technical things. For example, we did not realize that there are only two flights in a week from Romania to Pakistan. When the artist missed his flight, we were doomed. We had no idea what to do. We knew nobody in Romania, so we could not get a charter. Our lack of information and organization led to this loss, but we did refund the tickets for the concert because we had all the information (phone
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numbers, IDs and names) of the people who had purchased the tickets. We learned how important and crucial it is to be prepared and informed in this business" (Tipu).

Miradore has one office in Karachi where it also held one commercial event. Karachi is known for political disturbances on an everyday basis, but Miradore was new to these. So, its event (concert) was canceled because of a political rally. Miradore was not allowed to execute the event for safety reasons. In another incident, Miradore was not aware of the monopoly of the local people over organizing events in Karachi. So, it was not allowed to execute its event in the city.

According to Miradore’s managerial team, such things happen when one misses the details and ignores cultural resources. In both the incidents, local cultural information and links with the local administration were ignored, and this resulted in losses. However, to maintain their ethical standards, they did refund all the tickets and gained respect and a good reputation in the new station. Now Miradore has all the information about the sites and has a successfully running office in Karachi and its executes events there on a regular basis.

Adeel shared that Miradore tries to be up to date on many fronts and knowing the market is the first step. Managing creativity is also very important in this business and for this information about trends and market choices should not be missed (Table 11).

"We are not artists, so we cannot imagine how a stage should look at night. We take inspiration from our surroundings and the internet is a big source of this inspiration. We observe trends in colors, designs and themes both locally and globally. Then when this information is gathered, we structure it and analyze it and then create something of our own."

Miradore Weddings was started with the aim of providing personalized service. When it started, Tipu, Adeel and Abdul Rehman felt that all the event planners were providing the same type of wedding without any customization. They felt that there was no uniqueness in designs and ideas. The only difference was in prices, as event planners were charging very high prices but their services were not customized. Miradore Weddings was the start of customized and personalized weddings. For Miradore the mission is not just delivering on time and providing what is has committed but delivering on time and delivering more than what it promised.

"For us, it is an everyday thing, but for our clients it’s a one-time event so we put all our efforts and energy to make it the best memory for our clients. We gather information about our clients to know them well, discuss what they want in the event and then we start suggesting things accordingly. After talking to the clients, we also discuss all the information amongst ourselves. Tipu does a lot of research to provide inputs for each idea because we believe in satisfied and happy clients" (Adeel).

In one case when Miradore could not do as it had promised, the client was upset. So, Miradore refunded almost 60 percent of the payment to the client. Then, it sent an apology note along with free tickets for a concert.
6.3.4 Case Summary

Miradore Weddings is an event planner with a diverse profile that is focusing on different events including corporate and fashion events and personalized birthdays. However, weddings are its specialty. Miradore Weddings’ resource mobilization is different from the first two cases as it completely relied on personal efforts to arrange for resources for Miradore Weddings. Since the partners were already running the production business, resource mobilization was solely based on their personal savings and pooling of resources from their production business. However, the partners prefer to strengthen their network relations not only for personal benefits but also for mentoring new entrants. In particular, they use their events as an inspiration for other event planners to get new creative ideas. According to them this gives them the next challenge of bringing something new to the market. Miradore shared a few instances when it was not successful in executing the planned events. The reason mentioned was that even if they planned the events well, they were not good at utilizing local cultural information for their benefit. For example, in one instance they did not have a good local network and the local monopoly holders (local event planners) did not allow them to execute their planned event. So, they reinforced that for new entrants’ knowledge of the local culture should not just be collected but it should also be used for one’s benefit for better business execution and development.
Table 11 Resource Mobilization in Miradore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
<td>Resource Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Savings from jobs by all partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Established Miradore Productions. Miradore Weddings was started from the profits and savings from events organized by Miradore Productions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills.</td>
<td>Information and inspiration for new ideas and creative events and wedding designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong relations with competitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Resources for Miradore Weddings were provided through Miradore Productions initially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
<td>Legitimacy through following local rules and working out local collaborations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constraints</td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding local rules and norms is crucial for the successful execution of events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 4: OEM International

Overseas Event Management (OEM International) is an event firm that is run by two partners, Ibrahim and Larosh. OEM International’s parent company is Overseas International Magazine which publishes a monthly magazine in Urdu for overseas Pakistanis. Ibrahim started it while he was doing his MBA from Iqra University. Ibrahim was always interested in event management and was actively involved in event management activities while studying. All university events though were done in the name of some other event management company. Larosh joined Ibrahim later. He has done his BBA from NUST University and is now planning to sit for the most prestigious civil services exam in Pakistan to join the bureaucracy. Meanwhile, Larosh is also working at the Ministry of Information as a marketing and event management executive.

OEM International is best known for corporate and commercial events, especially concerts by local and international artists. In 2016 it also started OEM Weddings as a separate entity and entered into the wedding events business.

6.4 Resource Mobilization in OEM

6.4.1 Resource Identification

OEM’s parent company is in the print media, but Ibrahim thought of doing something new. Ibrahim knew that he would be in the event management field, so he started gathering information to know what the most innovative ideas for the events industry would be.

“Event management cannot be taught, it needs experience. Also, in the domestic market, perceptions about hotel management and catering are confused with event management and this can limit the scope of the event management industry. The main issue is that local people still do not know what event management is. I don’t mean only clients. For example, for gaining experience I have been in workshops that claim to teach event management and there they show how to arrange a table and how to do the décor. But for god’s sake, this is not event management. It could be hotel management, but event management is very broad we should be very clear about its scope” (Ibrahim).

There are no laws or regulations. Business ethics are not followed correctly. People commit to things without knowing what is happening around them and how to provide quality services. The government has some food relevant legislation, but no one implements them and there is no check.

Government support is a big challenge. The government is not supporting any international commercial events. When such events are arranged, they are the responsibility of the event management company which arranges everything from event planning, execution to the artist and audiences’ security and safety.
"The government does not help with safety, but it will not allow holding certain events. We need a no objection certificate (NOC) for events so we need to have very well-prepared feasibility and viability reports for our commercial events" (Larosh).

Both Larosh and Ibrahim believe that event management is something that cannot be taught, and it is experience that guides the event management process smoothly.

"We train our team well through practical experience. This cannot be taught by scripts or dictations. We take the people to sites and they observe event execution. They sit with us and try to research the market, clients, demands, trends and themes. These might sound like the basics of event management, but these are the things where most issues come up if they are not managed responsibly so experience is the main ingredient in assessing how correct the information is and also in managing the event" (Ibrahim).

"With our experience, we know how to deal with clients and vendors so that we are on the same page. This is also why we believe in giving practical training and experience to our team on a regular basis so that if they have to assess anything in our absence they should know how to work and how to make decisions and deal with clients" (Larosh).

The OEM team believes in open communication with its stakeholders be it vendors, corporate clients or private clients.

"Communication gives an appropriate sense of direction, it gives synergy to each stakeholder involved in the event planning process. We work with information and then interpret and discuss this with our stakeholders" (Larosh).

The partners also shared how a single piece of information can lead to financial savings if it is communicated well. They had a concert and the proposal was for around 4 lacs PKR, but they had done their research and had information about the market segment and they bid for 15 lakh PKR. They were proven right and they earned 12 lakh PKR in profit because of systematic information communication.

“To keep everything on track we have particular focal persons who have checklists and documentation of meetings. We verify this information with our stakeholders. This is important for making decisions and keeping up with details” (Ibrahim).

OEM also has a creative team which collects information on ideas, designs and concepts through the internet, personal interactions with clients and discussions with team members and managerial teams. Creative designers and writers bring ideas based on their qualifications, experience and research.

6.4.2 Resource Gathering

6.4.2.1 Informal Social Support

OEM got support from both friends and family. Ibrahim’s friends were like-minded and helped in establishing the company’s concept, agenda, team and marketing strategies.
Family provided both moral and financial support. Parent company Overseas International provided it an identity, the national tax number (NTN), office space, finances and encouragement.

6.4.2.2 Collaborations

A big part of OEM International’s human resources comes from collaborations with universities.

"Currently we have a team of 13 marketing executives. They are either fresh graduates from NUST and Iqra or they are students in the business and marketing fields. Our strategy is that we train them by taking them with us to our event venues and asking them to observe certain things. Based on their interests and sophistication levels, we divide them into different teams and distribute tasks accordingly. Some teams work in the wedding section, some in the corporate sector, some others in the production section and some in the commercial set up so this is how we arrange our team. The team gets training and certificates, and we get a valuable human resource, and yes if they are good, they join us as members of our permanent team. Some of them are senior executives so it’s like a cycle” (Larosh).

OEM has also temporary ushers who are again students hired on a project to project basis depending on project needs.

6.4.3 Resource Utilization

Ibrahim believes in following market trends systematically. He researches market trends and demands regularly.

"My agenda is to bring something new and at the same time to be in line with the parent company so after researching the market I thought about bringing international artists to Pakistan because what was happening was that our artists were going internationally to perform but due to terrorism and security issues, international artists were not performing in Pakistan and our audience did not get a chance to hear international artists. I took this as a challenge. I knew it was risky but something that was the demand of the time” (Ibrahim).

"We regularly scan the market to know the trends since we are famous for commercial events. We also do musical events once every six months, so we need to follow famous international artists who are favorites in Pakistan closely” (Larosh).

When OEM works with an international artist, then the rule of thumb is to work with resource estimations for six months. This includes market demand, trends, audience surveys and the artist’s popularity. Then comes the artist’s profile, contact information and appointments. Before contacting the artist formally, they have a raw estimation of costs, budget, visas, ambassadors, security, safety and the timing of the show. "Our systematic working pays off as even artists trust us now. They have added us to their WhatsApp contacts and we have friendly relations with them because they know that we believe in paying systematic attention to details” (Ibrahim).

OEM’s main aim is bringing top world DJs and bringing a new level to commercial events in the Pakistani market.
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“We are already working on the next big things that we want to do. It is something ultimate which is impossible for Pakistani studios and it demands significant procedures and a lot of work. We want that when people talk about us, they remember us as people who know our work, so we are working on it and trying to find out more about aviation laws in Islamabad as these DJs have their private jets which our aviation authorities do not allow so let's see how this goes.”

Cultural information and societal values are always crucial for a business’ success.

“ We started OEM International as students, so we need to be aligned with social values and societal demands. We cannot do everything but do only those things which are legitimate and acceptable by society. Only then will we get social and financial support from our parents, friends and families. So, event planning is and always will be done in the context of culture and society and we are extremely careful about these for our success and reputation” (Larosh).

6.4.4 Case Summary

OEM is the only case that started with its parent company Overseas International. Overseas International is a company in the print media. OEM got its early finances, labor and office space from Overseas International. Initially, OEM worked to refine its ideas for events with international artists in Pakistan. Later when its name was established it got its own NTN number, a new office and is also building its own management team. OEM owns a few head offices in big cities. Apart from its geographical expansion, OEM has also expanded its profile to include weddings by starting OEM Weddings in 2016. Table 12 shows its resource mobilization activities in the early years. It can be seen that OEM relied on information and knowledge to get cultural resources. This allowed it to gain social legitimacy and helped it align with social values. OEM used its cultural knowledge to market events. For example, OEM realized that the youth was frustrated with terrorist attacks and security issues. So, it’s used events as a source of positive energy and promoted liveliness to relieve local tensions about terrorist attacks and tried to change the local narrative from being very negative about the country to giving it a relatively softer image among the youth.
### Table 12 Resource Mobilization in OEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Started with the same NTN number as its parent company Overseas International.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing overseas event management with the same tax number to avoid extra expense on registration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td>Market knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborations with universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Overseas employment (parent company) provided raw materials and office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Later OEM International opened an independent office with its own team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
<td>Aligned with social values and societal demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To socially legitimize, to get social and financial support from parents, friends and families for both success and its reputation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 5: Flower King

Flower King is an event planning business whose story goes back to 1997 when Rao Arif opened a small flower shop. Rao Arif was exceptional in making bouquets and soon got a loyal customer base. In 1999, he was given an order to decorate a traditional Pakistani wedding function called mehndi. There Rao introduced the mehndi swing stage in the local market in Islamabad. This was appreciated so much by the guests that he got a few orders and from that his journey of starting Flower King started in 1999. Now Flower King is a famous name in weddings, especially for mehndi functions and flower decorations.

6.5 Resource Mobilization in Flower King

6.5.1 Resource Identification

Flower King started as a flower shop. When Rao got his first order for decorating a wedding event, he arranged it as a florist. However, he did special decorations and the arrangement and decorations were appreciated by the guests. Here started Flower King’s journey. Rao started providing the décor for wedding events. He changed his flower shop into an office and started operating as Flower King from the same location. He is a retired officer from the aviation field, so he had a good network of aviation officers and had good local knowledge about client demands. He is also a great florist. So, in the start he started decorating events alone. Later when the orders increased, he hired a team member. Now they are partners in Flower King. Flower King majorly relies on collaborations, panels and informal labor.

Flower King is a popular name in arranging mega wedding events which has its own labor, management team, catering services and marquee.

Arranging venues in Islamabad and Pindi are the biggest challenge currently. There are no public venues for events and those with marquees have started creating a monopoly. Marquee owners do an event on the condition that no other event planner can take over the event and the marquee owner will arrange everything. In this way, high resource restaurant and hotel owners are trying to take back the event industry through their monopolistic strategies. Internet and market surveys are fundamental sources of getting information about market trends and resource estimations.

Flower King is planning to expand, and the next step is purchasing a marquee. Marquee is a new trend in the event industry in Pakistan and big names in the event industry are investing in it.

"We are gathering information on planning our food set up and buying a marquee. We have been following the market very closely. Moreover, we know that if we plan our food set up
well and provide venues through our marquee then we can go far ahead and stay in the market” (Rao).

6.5.2 Resource Gathering

6.5.2.1 Friends

Help from friends and family forms a big part of Flower King. Arranging venues is a big challenge in the local market in Islamabad. Rao asked his friend for some solutions and a friend provided his farmhouse for events. This became a famous trend and event planners started connecting with farm owners in Chuk Shehzad (farmhouse place in Islamabad) to provide venues. However, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) of Islamabad banned all events in farmhouses for security and safety reasons.

6.5.2.2 Panel

Flower King is arranging resources by having different vendors on its panel. These vendors can also be different event planners who can work with anyone. They are not limited to Flower King.

6.5.2.3 Powerful Network

Rao was a former captain in the naval forces. He had good contacts with naval and armed forces’ officers. Initial orders for Flower King came from his personal network. Even now after 16+ years this network and younger generations are Rao's loyal clients. This personal network has grown and so has Flower King.

6.5.2.4 Informal Labor

Arranging a workforce at the last minute is not an easy job. A lot of labor is required for arranging floor setups, transporting the equipment, setting the stage and organizing seating. For this a huge labor force is present in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, so Flower King has good relations with these people who willing to deliver quality service even if asked at the eleventh hour.

6.5.3 Resource Utilization

Following the market is central to any business. This not only involves following trends, prices, themes, costs and ideas but according to Rao, market competition also cannot be ignored. Mostly new entrants do not know the nature of the current local competition in the market.

"The event planning business is seen to be an easy entry business by many but over the years I have learned that this is not entirely true, especially in the current circumstances. For example, what is happening is that the traditional hotel industry has started buying marquees and giving
venues to clients when they offer their marquees. They also put certain restrictions that décor and food will be supplied by them so basically, they are trying to create a monopoly and take this event planning business back to the hotel industry as it was in the past. Entering this field without any prior and relevant information is suicidal for business” (Rao).

Following current market trends, Flower King has purchased waterproof marquees to secure wedding events and to ensure 175,000 PKR which is the current rent for a marquee venue for a one-day event.

Rao believes that Flower King is everything because of its clients. So, delivering quality service is not only his strategy but the secret of his survival and success as well. According to Rao this can be done by working closely with clients and understanding their personal and customized demands.

“We are experienced to a level that we can assess information related to the relevant resources required for an event just by looking at the venue. For example, one client came to us and asked for two functions for a wedding and we said okay. However, later this client came back and said, ‘You do only one function. We have arranged the second function with another event planner.’ We were fine with this and we did the first function. However, the next day the client called us in panic and requested us to handle the second function also because the other event planner had ruined the function. We went there and willingly helped the other event planner clean the mess as it had made a wrong estimate for seating. We managed the whole function and advised the planner to do a planned estimation of resources next time because we have also learned all this over time with experience. So, experience is everything for us” (Rao).

In the second example Rao emphasized the importance of resource utilization as:

"A common trend in the local market is copying designs and pretending to be an event planner but these fake event planners have no experience in the execution of the designs and concepts. For example, they do not know what the thickness and quantity of the foam should be to fix the flowers and how many sticks of flower should be attached. This can only be done by an experienced florist.”

6.5.4 Case Summary

Flower King grew from a very small flower shop to an established event planning business. Its main activity is weddings. However, it also does corporate, personal, fashion and sports events. Flower King relies on its personal network and
personal flower decorating skills for event execution. After a few early events the shop was converted into an event planning firm and the small shop is still Flower King’s main office. Flower King has grown over the years and is now an established event planning firm and it helps new entrants and another florist in the market through mentoring. It also gives used flowers to florists so that they can arrange local small level events at nominal costs. Flower King has given a whole new meaning to collaborations with competitors with its charity and mentoring. Financially, Flower King has been growing and it has now purchased its own marquee, as this will solve the problem of venues. Earlier it would give all its profits to the marquee owner but now these are Flower King’s savings. Table 13 shows that Flower King relied on cheap resources which it repurposed for its own use. This utilization of second hand and cheap resources in new ways gave it hypes in the market. For example, it used the traditional jhoola for the very first time as it was not a part of the mehndi function in most local weddings.

Table 13 Resource Mobilization in Flower King

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>Cash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Constraints</td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constraints</td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 6: Nutshell

Nutshell is an event management company owned by Munaj Akmal. Munaj wanted to join the Pakistan army but could not because he met with an accident which led to problems with his backbone. So, he joined his cousin’s company who was doing corporate events for the telecom sector. From there Munaj started thinking about his own event management company and with the help of friends he finally started his company in 2009. The first two years were quite difficult and Munaj only did small events for colleges and schools. In 2011, he got an opportunity to arrange an event for the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). This concert was a success and Nutshell came into the limelight. Currently, the Nutshell group is a big name and Nutshell Event Services is a part of this group.

Nutshell has taken events to a whole new level. It can do any event and provide everything for the entire event. This not only includes décor and setups but also accommodation, dealing with guests, food, clothing suggestions, makeup and transport. This is a fairly new and unique concept that no one else is providing at the moment.

6.6 Resource Mobilization in Nutshell

The main challenge for Munaj personally is that his family wants him to have a ‘proper’ career. They think that event planning is not a proper career, meaning he should be in some regular job. For this reason, Munaj is also working part-time in a bank and is also preparing for the civil services exam. He thinks that if he clears the exam, he will not shut down the business but transfer it to his wife, and he will work on it as and when needed.

The local mindset is a big challenge. People do not regard this business as something big.

“They do not give respect and treat us as if they own us. I mean we are putting all our energy and passion but when in return we do not get respect it is disappointing. The local mindset needs to change.”

The government also does not support event planning.

“When we apply for governmental loans our applications are not accepted because public officers say that they cannot sanction loans for this type of business. Today if I apply for a loan for the gas station, I am sure I will get it but not for event planning. Bribery is another big issue at the governmental level.”

6.6.1 Resource Identification

Nutshell is an event planning firm that was started with the aim of doing events for families with an army background. However, it is now targeting everyone.
Like other event management firms, Nutshell too provides diverse activities. It executes events for the corporate and private sectors and also does social and fashion events. Munaj entered the business when he could not join the army because of his injury. Event planning was a good choice for him as he had college experience in dealing with student events through the entrepreneurial society. He also had business experience as he was working in his cousin’s business. As a result, he had gathered information and had knowledge of the local market and business management. He started his own business and started doing events for army colleges and universities and for army families. He used his own savings and his family’s finances to establish his office. His friends helped him market his events among their peers. He also got a good contract with a university for events and getting cheap labor through student volunteering. Munaj’s family provided him moral and financial support. Nutshell is growing slowly and is a known name in Rawalpindi.

Experience is helpful in assessing any information. In Nutshell the whole team discusses everything about a new situation. For example, Munaj’s mother is an informal director of planning, which means she does not get paid, but she evaluates any situation and then either plans the event or guides the team. Imran is another senior member of Nutshell who provides guidance in dealing with almost all types of situations. Both of them are senior in age and have job experience.

The main sources of information are the internet and public interactions. Students help in gathering information about market trends, ideas and themes.

6.6.2 Resource Gathering

6.6.2.1 Informal Social Support

Munaj got finance from his family to set up his office. Munaj’s cousin was a big help when he gave him a job without any experience or knowledge and let him work on different projects to gain experience in organizing events. Friends were helpful in providing information about market trends and in getting events for universities.

6.6.2.2 Collaborations

Nutshell has active collaborations with different industries. Nutshell provides not only event management for one-day and two-day events but also deals with guest accommodation, transport, bridegroom’s photoshoots and makeup. Thus, for Nutshell it is important to have strong collaborations with other companies as according to Munaj all the industries are interlinked.

“No one can work alone even if you have millions. You are nothing alone in a business, you cannot simply do it without collaborations with stakeholders.”
Nutshell’s strategy is including students in its team. Students can work as long as they want but are not paid though they get some share of the profit based on their hours of work or their contribution to the event.

"Students are great in bringing new ideas and creative concepts. We add fresh students to our projects regularly. They get recommendation letters and experience certificates from us as interns or some are attached for the long term and they get some share in the profit. We in turn get human resources and fresh ideas from them."

Nutshell has a strategy of expanding its networks and relations with other event planners and vendors. It has details about vendors and event planners which helps in problematic situations.

“Once we had an event for a Chinese delegation for 2,200 people but it was the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awal and a Friday and there were sacred processions all around. You know how it is when all the roads are blocked and plus whenever we have a holy event or a political event the government blocks mobile services. We had a big problem because we had no prior information about this type of a situation. Nutshell’s strategy of dealing with other event planners helped. I requested another event planner and it arranged everything, but we were in the front so that’s why I believe that we are nothing without different stakeholder combinations.”

6.6.2.3 Third-Party Collaborations

Nutshell’s Facebook page and website state clearly that it is open to any joint projects even with its competitors.

“I am an open-minded person and my team says clearly that everybody has the right to earn and work. We can work with our competitors and we have done projects with different event planners I think this should be done in the whole market.”

Collaborations follow proper terms and conditions. For example, if Nutshell is on the front then its competitors cannot publicize or advertise the event as their own. It has to be in Nutshell’s name.

“Such collaborations are important for preventing monopolies from being created in the market. I even refer clients to other event planners when I am full.” Munaj.

6.6.3 Resource Utilization

Munaj has an army background. His father and cousins are in the army. He could not join the army because of a backbone injury, but he had information on how army people organize and work with sophistication. He introduced the same principles in his business. He works very systematically when it comes to collecting details about event planning and execution. One of the things that Nutshell has introduced in the market is wireless technology during events which comes from the armed forces’ way of working on projects.

"I introduced the wireless system in event planning locally. This is a very welcome step because earlier people were just running around after each other during an event but now because of the wireless system we have brought sophistication to the events."

Munaj shared:
“See Rome was not built in one day. Even if you have resources you cannot do event planning with money as it involves awareness and exposure to the market, culture and society for bringing new ideas and positioning your events uniquely.” Thus, information seeking is given special attention in Nutshell.

Nutshell is planning to expand by going into the marquee business. This is the new trend and scarcity of venues demand marquees. Event planners with marquees are assured of survival in the long run.

Munaj believes that everything that Nutshell does should be viable socially. Maintaining quality and people’s trust is Nutshell’s main principle. Other than that, Munaj believes in integrating all stakeholders because this might help in creating jobs at the societal level.

"I have experienced a phase of life when I was jobless. It was tough, so I welcome everyone who wants to work even if they are inexperienced or even if they are our competitors. We want to create more jobs in society even at the cost of sharing our profits."

Another contribution of Nutshell is looking after problems in the locality and working at resolving them. For example, it has worked on road repairs around its offices for which Munaj paid from his own pocket.

"Nutshell is a regular part of charity and for improving our social surroundings by working with the students and helping the poor. Social obligations are a part of my training, and now they are part of Nutshell."

6.6.4 Case Summary

Nutshell is an event planning business that is growing slowly. Munaj is trying to establish it and will continue with his bank job. Munaj aims to shift his business to his wife in the future. Nutshell is an accidental business that was started because Munaj could not join the army. However, Munaj is not ready to exit the business. His mother is helping him, and he thinks in future his wife can take over and he will go in for a proper career. As Table 14 shows, personal networks helped Munaj arrange resources for Nutshell. Nutshell is growing from a niche of working with the army to worker with a broader circle of clients. Nutshell aims to have a good image as a wedding planner in the market. Currently, this event planner is executing small events or random events in a wedding. Nutshell believes that event planners should design events instead of arranging an event, that is, they should arrange all the main events in a wedding along with bridal dresses, makeup, venues, catering and designing. According to Nutshell, event designing is only possible with strong collaborations with competitors and using these collaborations for collective event designing rather than going in for competitive event planning.
Table 14 Resource Mobilization in Nutshell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Gathering: Finances from family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Utilization: Multiple jobs, family help with finances and savings from the business were used for establishing Nutshell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Gathering: Collaborations with universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Utilization: To do events with fair possibilities for new entrants in the market, to avoid a monopoly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Utilization: Third party collaborations provided with raw materials initially. Later Nutshell established its own office with the profits earned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Utilization: Personal network was used for getting offers from universities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                  |                                | Resource Utilization: Maintaining trust among the stakeholders through quality work and social contributions like road repairs around the office.
Case 7: Concept Events

Concept Events started in July 2009 and does corporate events. It is owned by Bilal Riaz. After two years, Bilal started Shenaye for wedding events. Shenaye Weddings is high profile and works with big budgets and does full events. In 2015 Concept Events expanded to include another funky profile Cotton Candy. Cotton Candy works for birthday events and on cultural themes for small events like engagements and mayuns (special event before the wedding for putting mehndi on the bride). Cotton Candy works on many other small things as well like birthday supplies, for example, hats, balloons, candles and gift wrapping.

6.7 Resource Mobilization in Concept

6.7.1 Resource Identification

Bilal worked for newspaper Dawn for four years where he arranged all the events for the newspaper. This experience gave him information, knowledge and experience in arranging events. He got interested in this field, so he left his job and started his event planning firm. Bilal started Concept Events using his own savings from multiple jobs. He had knowledge of the local market and excellent PR skills as he had been in the media. He used all his resources to establish Concept Events. His networks and PR helped him in getting good offers. However, he mentions that for him to gain cultural resources and social legitimacy among family members was and is still sometimes more critical. He shared two instances of social pressure and local mindsets. According to Bilal these are important resources and really impact one’s survival in a business. If social legitimacy or trust is not earned, then you do not stand to earn anything. Therefore, excellent PR is central for improving local mindsets.

Social pressure to accept event planning as a decent career is still a big challenge.

“When you study so much and that too abroad and you end up with an event planning business in Pakistan people do not take it seriously. Our parents do not understand that it’s a much bigger business than doing catering or working with flowers. I have a big network. I even work with ministers, vice presidents and multinationals and at the same time I have to put the chairs right and meet the daily wage labor, but my parents do not understand all this so social acceptance for event planners as entrepreneurs is still a big challenge.”

The current government has increased taxes which has increased costs and of course decreased private clients. People think that event management businesses have higher costs, but they do not see that this is because of government taxes. Another side effect is that most event management companies take cash to avoid taxes and provide services in black.
6.7.2 Resource Gathering

6.7.2.1 Powerful Links (Public Relations)

Bilal explains that when they do corporate or commercial events, then everything is based on public relations (PR). In Corporate events, 80 percent of the work is offered based on PR. Usually, in the corporate sector:

"Events are offered because of a request for quotations (RFQ) but if we have excellent PR, we even get the contract before RFQ," Bilal saying, adding, "Having said this it does not mean that anyone will compromise on quality. Quality comes first and then PR." PR and social media are the two major sources for getting information on trends, demands and competition.

6.7.2.2 Third-Party Collaborations

Event management mainly relies on contracts and third-party collaborations in Pakistan. Contracts are temporary in nature and done with wage labor. This means that they can work anywhere and everywhere, but they should prioritize their contracts in case of an event. Third-party collaborations are services where the event management business co-opts resources without owning the resources itself. Concept has both types of collaborations. It is using third-party collaborations for itself and also provides third-party collaborations to new planners who do not have their resources and have no financial means of building their resource base.

6.7.3 Resource Utilization

Event management is a business in which getting offers for events is not difficult but maintaining and improving one’s profile is critical. If lights are not good or if the sound is not good, then the rest of the things like decorations and food do not matter so it is very important that the quality of each aspect is seen as being important otherwise one can be out of business in days.

Bilal thinks that information seeking in the event planning business is very crucial for survival and developing the business in the long term.

"People do not understand this business and they think that it is a very easy business. However, it is not. Let me tell you that one needs to manage resources, vendors, clients, public relations (PR), costing and profit margins and this is not possible without proper homework."

Bilal believes that event management is a business where there is always scope for making mistakes. Concept Events ensures quality but still there are situations where technical things are not in their control, for example, the sound may trip, and lighting issues may come. For example:

“Once in an event we could not handle the client meter and it was damaged. The client was super unhappy, but we did not run from the event and instead apologized and fixed it and completed the event.” Bilal explained that he could handle the situation because he
has experience in handling this or similar situations and second, Concept knows where and how things can be compensated or fixed.

Experience is the key to knowing what is right or what is not in a situation. For maintaining the quality of services, it is important to be well informed about clients’ demands. Concept has a policy of having at least ten meetings before finalizing each detail in a client’s order. After these meetings, all layouts are prepared and approved before the event is executed.

Concept Events has a strategy of following the market not only for finding new trends or demands from the public but also to have a close look at the competition. Many companies are mushrooming, and many are also winding up because of non-commitments. Concept’s strategy is diversification. It offers three different yet inter-related event streams -- corporate, commercial and wedding events. This is because:

“Concept is diversifying as the current market has seasonal trends in wedding events and the budgets keep changing in the corporate sector, so we cannot stick to one type of profile because of these ups and downs in the market.”

6.7.4 Case Summary

Concept Events was started by Bilal. It has not only established itself, but it has also launched additional businesses Shehnayee and Cotton Candy. Concept Events is now owned by two partners. Like Flower King Concept Events too started on a very small scale and it has grown rapidly as it enjoys a good reputation in the market. Table 15 gives the resource mobilization activities at Concepts when it started. The table shows that apart from information as a major resource, Bilal also credits PR as a central skill for survival. Bilal is an MBA but thinks that it is experience and practice that are important in using one’s knowledge effectively. Bilal also arranges event planning workshops and provides firsthand information to new entrants in the market. Concept aims to work on local mindsets so that small businesses, especially event businesses are seen more positively. Social pressures that do not see small businesses and event businesses as a main career act as a constraint in gaining social legitimacy.
Table 15 Resource Mobilization in Concept Events

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Savings from previous job in a newspaper and as a freelancer.</td>
<td>Establishing Concept Events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td>Third-party collaborations.</td>
<td>Third-party collaborations for itself in the start, and now with other event planners in the market who are new and do not have resources or investments to build their resource base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Third-party collaborations.</td>
<td>Third-party collaborations for itself to begin with. Now Concept Events has its own resource base and marquee and has opened new businesses like Shenayee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
<td>Trust among networks.</td>
<td>Trust among personal and other social networks to maintain its reputation as a proper career was the biggest challenge in the start. However, over the years trust in quality event work has helped it gain enough cultural acceptance among the public.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 8: Revelations

Revelations Event Management and Decorators is run by a young entrepreneur, Hira Ali. It provides event management services at affordable rates. The company took off after Hira and her team organized several children's birthday parties. In this age of creative promotional tactics, Revelation's popularity spread by word of mouth publicity alone. Hira provides customized events and budgets allowing her clients to pick and choose what they feel most comfortable with. Apart from event management, Revelations also provides innovative packages like ‘12 am at your doorstep’, where her team delivers cakes and presents to loved ones at midnight. ‘Forever 26’ caters to couples, where candlelit dinners are organized at Pir Sohawa, so couples can spend quality time in a private area against the backdrop of the city’s sprawling metropolis. Revelations also brings efficient and brilliant artisans to one’s doorstep. Packages can be personalized to meet budgets. Revelations’ activities include weddings, birthdays, bridal and baby showers, hen night, corporate meetings and events, seminars and exhibitions, brunches, hi-teas, cupcakes/cakes and food.

6.8 Resource Mobilization in Revelations

6.8.1 Resource Identification

Hira is an interesting person who is very straightforward in sharing her thoughts. She says that this business is nothing without research and knowledge about the field.

"I tell you I cannot even draw a straight line myself. I just do my homework well, I do the research, I collect information and I am never short of ideas and the rest is done by my team. I am good at managing and supervising and not creating but you know information and research is the soul of this business that can sustain you for long."

Social circles, the internet and word of mouth publicity are the primary sources of information for Revelations.

The biggest problem is with copyright issues. People copy everything, even minute details. Hira says:

"It hits my soul that people copy each and everything. I have always used my original ideas and now I have also contacted a lawyer. Let's see how it goes. This is a challenge where I feel helpless."

Wage labor usually belongs to the poor class. For example, “All floors and venues of all events are set up by the labor and vendors who live in interior Pindi. All the warehouses are in Pindi because it is more cost-effective and cheaper but during strikes and political rallies this can be a huge setback because our resources cannot be supplied in time. The conditions in our country affect us badly.”
Surviving in a patriarchal society and getting the young entrepreneur award are big achievements for Hira. She says:

“Being in a male dominated society we always get instructions on how to talk and how to dress covering our head when going to interior Pindi to talk to vendors etc. etc.”

People in Pakistan are still relatively new to the event management business and so they do not give it enough respect. Hira says:

“It’s a big challenge because it can demotivate young and new entrepreneurs. People see it as a catering business or someone setting a canopy, and they argue about payments on such grounds.”

### 6.8.2 Resource Gathering

#### 6.8.2.1 Informal Social Support

Revelations got a boost from its social network. For Revelations, friends have been a huge help right from designing its logo, arranging a Facebook page, teaming up and going to doorsteps for delivering surprises and arranging cakes, gift boxes and other items. Revelations started in 2009 and for one year all its events were done for Hira’s friends as they desperately wanted Revelations to be something big.

Hira also took a loan of 50,000 PKR from a friend to arrange her first mega event in 2010. Revelations introduced the concept of customized cakes for birthday events and here she again took help from a friend who has a small cake and baking company. Family support was always there for Hira. Hira is running Revelations from her home. Her family allowed her to take a small storage room at the back of the house to use as her office. She painted it and decorated it with help from her team. Apart from this her family is always with Hira and it is very broadminded. When Hira started her new segments and small events for young people, her family supported her in going out late at night and even at midnight. It was not easy for them, but they supported Hira’s passion.

Hira arranges the desserts like cupcakes and cookies as her mother is a professional baker and does customized cakes and desserts for events.

#### 6.8.2.2 Contracts

Apart from a permanent team Revelations also has temporary contracts with university students or with O level and A level students. They need pocket money and are very hardworking. They send a message to the Revelations team when they are free for a month, and accordingly, these temporary employees are contacted when required.

Some students also do internships at Revelations though they are not paid. Interns get experience certificates and work for Revelations for three to four months. Some of them have also got permanent employment as they were motivated and wanted to be part of the Revelations team.
"It's not like a 9-to-5 job even for permanent employees. They come only when there is an event or when required. However, permanent employees cannot work for other event planners, but temporary employees can" (Revelations).

6.8.2.3 Third-Party Collaborations

Revelations provides resources and material to its competitors who are new and have no inventory of their own. Revelations’ strategy is going in for good networking and collaborations with competitors. Hira personally follows all of them and willingly gives advice to those who ask her.

"We are not afraid of competition. We like it as this gives us the motivation to bring new ideas and concepts to the market."

6.8.3 Resource Utilization

Islamabad is usually described as a city that sleeps, but Revelations has brought a change to it by bringing a 12 am event to the doorstep. Hira and her very young team know about the young generation, and they know that this generation usually likes to celebrate their birthdays at 12 am (midnight) but cannot do it. They also want to personally wish their friends (especially girls because of mobility issues among girls in Pakistan).

So, Revelations introduced this event in which Hira’s team of 6 members gives birthday surprises. They show up at the doorstep with a customized cake, party poppers, balloons, bouquets and video cameras and sing birthday songs. This event is popular in the twin cities and Revelations does around 23-25 such events in a month.

Pakistan has a conservative culture, and it’s not possible for boyfriends and girlfriends to meet in their homes. So, Revelations brought in a service because it has a very young team which could relate to the young generation’s problems. It arranges events where it provides chocolates and flowers on Valentine’s day or randomly to a girlfriend or boyfriend at home. Again, it’s not a huge party but an affordable visit that brings a lot of happiness and is very popular.

Knowing the local culture, Revelations introduced different events at affordable prices for young people like Forever 26 and Love story at 7 am.

Revelations brought in the concept of the event management team wearing a uniform. It did this to give them a more professional look. This was appreciated by the community and its clients.

Experience and family and friends’ guidance are the main source for evaluating and understanding any situation. Hira wants to start events in other cities where there is a demand, but no services are available. She recently got married to an Army officer. Army officers get posted every two years in different cities and considering this Hira has already done her research on which cities she will be taking her business to. For example, she thinks that Multan and Faisalabad
Overview of Cases

have a lot of potential for these events and these cities do not have any company providing them.

Revelations is famous among the people in Islamabad and Rawalpindi because it has carefully followed societal demands. Pakistani society is conservative, and the young generation is not allowed to do many things. The local police can question young people about their whereabouts if they are seen alone without any senior person. Being aware of this local culture Revelations arranges small events for young people in its name where they can organize parties and events; it also delivers surprises at doorsteps. It is not only making events affordable and beautiful but also making things appear more legitimate and viable which is something that the society has warmly welcomed.

"We do not go to our villages to celebrate everyday small things. We do it with our friends. Our bond with friends is stronger than that with our families and cousins and this is what Revelations has picked up. Even when people can do some things themselves and can take cakes to friends themselves, they ask us because Revelations is a name It’s a brand."

6.8.4 Case Summary

Revelations was started by Hira as a challenge to her classmates. Hira is an MBA graduate and Revelations was her project in the final year. She prepared a feasibility report and presented the idea, but nobody believed her idea and that was the point where she decided that she will convert this project into reality. Table 16 shows Revelations’ journey and how it mobilized resources. Hira started on a small scale with a loan from a friend. She renovated a small store in the backyard as her office. She used second hand and cheap resources for her office. She targeted youth and young students for affordable events. This idea got popular in no time and Revelations became a fun event name for youth in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Revelations does affordable birthdays, engagements, tea parties and lunches for two.

Hira aims to change local mindsets about female entrepreneurship and the events business. She got married recently and aims to expand her business to cities other than Islamabad and Pindi.
### Table 16 Resource Mobilization in Revelations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resource Identification</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resource Gathering</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Loan from a friend for 50,000 PKR.</td>
<td>Establishing Revelations and arranging its first event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td>Collaboration with fresh graduates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Affordable and customized event ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office space, in-house.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
<td>Personal network of friends.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural awareness and demands among the youth locally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 9: Potter’s Wheel

Potter's Wheel is an initiative of young women entrepreneur Asma. It is a privately-owned design house that hosts a group of professionals who provide round-the-clock services for event management, graphic design, photography, interior design and copywriting. Potter's Wheel design house gives importance to designing, be it event designing or interior designing. It is a team of qualified and experienced young graphic designers who believe that design gives beauty to events and can capture dreams and transform them into reality. Event designing, and managing are conceptual, persuasive and emotive activities for the Potter's Wheel team. They want to break the norm that graphic designers should only be designers and have diversified into the event planning business and are providing event planning services to their clients. In this sense Potter's Wheel is not a traditional event planning business; it’s putting in significant efforts into creating online content. But it does manage to do events for its clients occasionally. It mostly does events by staying in the background and participating in them informally.

6.9 Resource Mobilization in Potter’s Wheel

6.9.1 Resource Identification

Asma says that her experience in graphic designing proved to be a major source for judging what kind of information she needed and what was relevant.

"To me, event design is very much like graphic design. I tell my students that if you can design you can do 'anything'. I mean, let me tell you if you are designing a logo or an event, it's all about pricing, color, arrangement, structure and functional layout. It's just experiences and researching new ways to do work that helps in moving your business in different directions."

Asma shared that an event planner should be conceptually very strong and for this, it is imperative that event planners do their research. Primary homework involves collecting all relevant information from relevant channels and conceptually mastering it before planning or executing any event.

"Designers at Potter's Wheel understand the importance of well-researched solutions and fully practice them. Be it event design or interior design, our designers think, practice and do logical work; they work in sync with a clock rather than against it."

Being graphic designers, the Potter's Wheel team is very well versed with newly developed apps and web tools. This constantly provides them with new concepts and creative ideas for designing events. They believe in personal and interactive relations with their clients. So, social media and competitors are good sources of information for the Potter's Wheel team.

Entrepreneurs and the event planning business are not given the status that they deserve in Pakistan. People do not understand this work properly. For
example, Asma said that people in her family ask her to arrange everything, do the décor and take photographs just like that. They do not give her respect and do not consider being professional as something important in the event planning business. Asma further explained that it’s because people do not understand the hard work that goes into designing and executing a business.

"Ladies give 10,000 PKR and say okay take it daughter but they do not know that the camera that I have rented to take photographs costs me 18,000 PKR per day so basically it's a big challenge in the local market."

Being a woman entrepreneur means more challenges. Asma shared that the government gives no incentives to entrepreneurs or women entrepreneurs, especially in urban areas. Many facilities like easy loans, easy registration of businesses and low taxes are still a big dream in entrepreneurship in Pakistan.

6.9.2 Resource Gathering

6.9.2.1 Personal Efforts

For resources for Potter's Wheel Asma is also doing a regular job. She is doing part-time teaching jobs at universities. A partner who recently joined her is also doing a job to help with the expenses. They both do not take fixed salaries from Potter's Wheel but invest everything in this company. They are not mostly doing events by being at the front, which means that they provide services to event planners in terms of designing tickets and designing and planning events. One reason for this is that they want to gain experience and have a proper inventory for event planning.

6.9.2.2 Volunteers

To address the human resource issue, they have interns who work with non-paid contracts and get internship certificates in return. They also have other temporary contracts for daily wages labor to reduce their costs on human resources.

6.9.2.3 Panels

Potter's Wheel is on the panels of different event planners and it provides services to them while for some events it takes the whole package, but this is mostly done informally.

6.9.3 Resource Utilization

Asma used her graphic designing skills to start the event planning business. She is convinced that event planning is event designing and conceptually all event plans should be strongly developed. She shares that graphic designers can design events much better than event planners who are not well versed with graphics
Overview of Cases

and IT. Asma is also a photographer by hobby, and she has now incorporated her photography and designing skills in design events and provides diverse services for events locally. Asma says:

"The one thing I find myself repeatedly saying to my clients is that event planning and designing is not about what you like or what I like. It's about what's best for our customers and our company. Clients believe us because we do our homework before meeting them and we know the basics of graphic designing. We apply these principles to event designing and planning. Our company has sustained and maintained this approach as following and guiding the clients is the best way to create value for them."

Potter's Wheel is a team of qualified graphic designers, so they have a strategy of following clients’ directions without compromising design and planning quality. That is why they do not let their clients do whatever they want until it is something that is best both price and quality wise.

Asma shared that information about the local culture in executing and developing any business is crucial in many situations. She suffered many losses in the early days because she was not aware of local practices. Being ignorant of the circumstances, she faced situations where people would not pay her well, disregard her efforts when the work was done, take her professional attitude very non-professionally, she also faced gender discrimination and trust and legitimacy issues for her skills and talent because she is a women. But later she learned how to handle such problems by getting professional. Now she says that no one can discriminate against her because she knows a lot about the culture, she does her homework and research before meeting any client and does not allow anyone not to give her respect, trust and legitimacy based on her gender.

6.9.4 Case Summary

Potter’s Wheel is an interesting case. Asma who owns the business is a graphic designer by profession and a photographer by hobby. She teaches in universities to arrange finances for her business. She has a team of graphic designers who not only design but also do event planning informally. They design events for other event planners and also decorate and arrange events; they also do photography for small events. Table 17 shows Potter’s Wheel’s expenses and resources. Potter’s Wheel arranges finances through regular jobs and investing all profits and salaries from their events in the business. For an office they have rented a space and for additional labor they rely on interns and informal labor. Potter’s Wheel is on different panels to provide event planning.
Table 17 Resource Mobilization in Potter’s Wheel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
<td>Resource Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Salaries and savings from parallel jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No fixed salary from Potter's Wheel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td>Third-party and being on event planners’ panels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interns, informal wage labor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Constraints</td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Rented a room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constraints</td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
<td>Social legitimacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Cases

Case 10: The Craft Manager

The Craft Manager started in 2011 as a micro-informal business owned by Kanwal. Kanwal aims to achieve sustainable incomes for home-based working women, together with fair wages and independence by being market-oriented and to economically empower women to improve their standard of living. Kanwal collaborates with home-based women artisans in Pakistan through district-level units on capacity building, product design development, quality control, packaging and marketing. She thinks that people can play a role in preserving the culture by purchasing goods which are made using natural dyes and unique techniques. Craft Manager aims to create sustainable opportunities through ethical business and fair-trade practices and by providing social protection to the workers.

It is developing a product portfolio which not only revives Pakistan's indigenous crafts but also produces and designs them in a way that is appealing to the market.

6.10 Resource Mobilization in Craft Manager

6.10.1 Resource Identification

To seek information on similar events, Kanwal followed and visited artisans’ exhibitions to see what their pitfalls and their strengths were. This quickly gave her a vision about how exhibitions promoting artisans should look. So, information seeking was the first step in making Craft Manager a reality. She also got attached to professional organizations like the Women’s Chamber of Commerce for more information about home-based artisans and the problems that they face in accessing market opportunities. Kanwal is a member of the Rotary Club and has designed a series of events for poor kids who are deprived of education. These include fund relief, seminars and focus group discussions in the interiors of Punjab. To evaluate the quality of its work, knowledge and learning Craft Manager does a debriefing after every event. The team sits together, and everyone looks at the problems faced, the good points and the things that can be improved the next time. The internet and personal interactions are sources for seeking and evaluating the right information. Guidance and advice from family is a very regular factor in evaluating any information and in designing any event. Parents and siblings are regularly involved in discussions when organizing new events. Kanwal thinks that entrepreneurship is serious business and it is not just following your hobby. Although working with small entrepreneurial ventures started as a hobby, converting it into a proper business only happened when Kanwal became more professional.
Business registration is a big challenge, especially for small businesses in Pakistan. Documentation and delays in the process lead to unregistered business activities. Businesses need to arrange documentation from the police, the tax office and the NTN papers cost 25,000 PKR. Not everybody can afford this amount.

Women entrepreneurs are facing a lot of challenges in Pakistan. Kanwal says: "Earning legitimacy for women entrepreneurs and for young women entrepreneurs is not easy here as people do not take us seriously and they think what she can do for others, but I have crossed that bridge. I have proved myself as being trustworthy among the same people who earlier wondered what I could do for others."

6.10.2 Resource Gathering

6.10.2.1 Family and Friends

The family is a valuable resource for Kanwal not only morally but also financially. She is a student still and has no personal savings. Her parents supported her in starting her business of decorated bangles and also Craft Manager. She has her office in her home. Friends provided her a network and some like-minded friends pooled resources and arranged the first few exhibitions to build a resource base and to test the response from the market. Kanwal’s family members like parents, uncle and siblings work for her when it comes to marketing, arranging resources and contacting artisans. Kanwal has a good network of government organizations like the Women’s Chamber of Commerce and their members come as guest speakers to promote events and to provide training to artisans. This network has not only helped her in promoting events but also added a lot of legitimacy to Craft Manager even though it is an informal micro-business.

6.10.2.2 Job

Kanwal has also started working in a part-time job with another local event planners (Saad Khan Event Management) as help manager. This is helping her gain experience, legitimacy, a salary and visibility in the market.

6.10.2.3 Volunteers

Human resource is another big issue, but Kanwal has managed it successfully by having dedicated workers, mostly students who work as volunteers. They share 5 percent of the total income when an event makes a profit. When an event earns no profit, then volunteers do not earn anything. These volunteers are a fixed team of five people who are working from the start of Craft Manager and are not replaced after every project or event.
6.10.3 Resource Utilization

Kanwal has changed traditional event planning in the local market that is heavily concentrated on wedding and birthday events. Craft Manager works on building regional solidarity among home-based workers, especially women artisans by providing them an empowered life that is free of poverty. Craft Manager aims to provide decent living opportunities and promotes local craft among the people.

However, it is not easy to deliver this. It is very important to know how to attract a local crowd and for this Kanwal first does market research and surveys to see interest and demand. Then she generates different indoor activities like Ludo championships and other indoor games along with artisans' stalls. This not only gets a huge crowd but also garners a lot of appreciation for local art and craft.

Existing services for informal artisans do not work for her product development and presentation. But Kanwal is interested in working for home-based artisans and giving them not only a platform but also providing them consultations on how to present and develop themselves. Another interest is providing the stalls at affordable prices to artisans because as Kanwal says:

"Existing artisan exhibitions provide a stall for around 10,000 PKR but no one works with artisans' presentation skills or crowd generation so if you pay 10,000 PKR and earn 2,000 PKR on it then it's not worth all the effort and hassle. This is not what we do. We provide consultations, a crowd and affordable rents. Why have a middleman? I do every bit myself in an event as it reduces my expenses and also leads to less burden on artisans. I am happy and so are the participants and they join me every time so it's a win for all of us."

This approach shows that Kanwal has an eye for detail. This innovative and logical solution has been made possible because of her knowledge about market and artisans’ problems. Consultations provided by Craft Manager include how to present and package products and services. Kanwal says that artisans do not know how they should price their products. The prices can be very high or very low, so they teach and train them and then they also do rehearsals before the exhibition because Craft Manager wants to see what the artisans have learned and how they will use this learning during the exhibition.

Pakistan is a country where political strikes are common, and this affects businesses. This can happen anytime, and the local public transport is usually blocked to avoid fights and injuries to the public. Kanwal also faced such situations in the early days of her business, when there was a strike and the stall holders faced losses because of a smaller crowd. They had information about the strike when the exhibition was planned. Kanwal took the responsibility and provided the artisans stalls at cheap rents in the next exhibition.

Earning money is not Craft Manager’s mission, instead working with the local community and empowering the poor is. To make the events more successful, Kanwal follows major religious and social festivities among the community and then arranges and plans events as per those festivals. She also believes in empowering the artisans and telling them how to be entrepreneurial. Another
important mission is creating social awareness among the people to not just appreciate but also use local products as this will help promote employment and fair trade in the country.

Following the market is a very crucial step for designing any event. Craft Manager does four events every year, and for two months at least it does research on the market before finalizing the ideas.

“We track the market and see what’s happening and then organize different events accordingly. We are doing the events in local markets in Pindi and Islamabad because we know that events that address both quality and affordability are not happening here. We know what kind of home-based workers exist here who can sponsor us and what kind of crowd we can get and what would be the profit margins.”

Following clients’ demands and trends is something that is done regularly by the Craft Manager team. In fact, "working with the target audience and the public to gather a huge crowd is central to an event’s success," Kanwal says. According to Kanwal the local public wants something new every time. To get the attention of the public many things are arranged with new and different angles. For example, along with exhibitions indoor games (like Ludo, a traditional Pakistani indoor family game), a family movie night with seating on the floor (traditional village-based sitting arrangement), seminars on artisans’ products (crafting) and health-related seminars are also organized.

### 6.10.4 Case Summary

Craft Manager is still in its survival stage. It is hoping to register in the future. Kanwal runs Craft Manager with the help of her family. Table 18 shows Kanwal’s attempts before launching Craft Manager. Kanwal is an economics graduate and had made a few attempts at running a business before starting Craft Manager. She has a part-time job with another established event planner to arrange finances and experience for her own event planning business. Apart from her own efforts Kanwal has constant family support. She also relies on cheap labor in the form of fresh graduates and informal labor. She believes in gaining cultural resources for the business’ survival and for building social trust for young, female entrepreneurs among the people.
### Table 18 Resource Mobilization in Craft Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cash. Family support. Decorated bangles business and later Craft Manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skills, labor. Part-time job. A job with another event planning firm to gain experience in the events business. They share an agreed amount of profit after each project. If there is no profit, they do not get anything. Permanent team of five students working as volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raw materials, Office based in her home. Family members like parents, uncle and siblings work when it comes to marketing, arranging resources and contacting artisans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Constraints</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance. Social legitimacy by attaching with professional organizations. Trust among the personal network. Professional memberships of the Women’s Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club provided information on possible clients, market and problems faced by women artisans. Like-minded friends pooled the resources and arranged the first few exhibitions together to help build a resource base and to test the response from the market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 11: Studio Events

Studio Events was started by Mehvish Saleem. Mehvish who is married and has a daughter belongs to a business family. Mehvish has good crafting skills, she designs and creates gift boxes, cards, bags and dresses at home. She decided to convert her hobby into a business and started Studio Events. Studio Events has a distinct profile as it does different events like baby showers, weddings and birthdays. It also provides wedding gifts for other event planners, wedding and party dresses, baby products, card printing and designing services and bridal room decor.

6.11 Resource Mobilization in Studio Events

The main challenge that Mehvish discussed was that in the local society art and craft is largely ignored.

"People prefer Chinese products and our local crafting skills are not highlighted because of the absence of any proper platform." Mehvish.

6.11.1 Resource Identification

Mehvish wants to give maximum time to her daughter; she collects all the relevant information on the web and through social media. Facebook is a platform for marketing and to get to know clients’ demands, trends and themes.

Mehvish belongs to a business family so her parents and her husband help her with networking, vendors and collecting market relevant information.

6.11.2 Resource Gathering

6.11.2.1 Family

For Studio Events resources are arranged by Mehvish’s family. Studio Events is run from Mehvish’s home; she meets all her clients there. She thinks that this arrangement is ideal for her because she cannot leave her daughter and she is also responsible for running her home.

Mehvish does not earn any income, all that she earns is put back in her business. Her husband supports her expenses.

Mehvish’s parents are also business people and have their own furniture business so they are an excellent source of advice and guidance for Mehvish and her business.
6.11.2.2 Personal Efforts
Mehvish has good crafting skills, which she uses to create and design all art and craft products herself. She has a workshop and storage on the second floor of her house where she has all the required equipment and supplies.

6.11.2.3 Informal Labor
Informal labor is the main source of human resources for Mehvish who gets help from her home helpers in preparing gift boxes and goodie bags. She arranges event setups from the market.
She has no permanent staff or any collaboration with other event planners.

6.11.3 Resource Utilization
Mehwish’s target is bringing awareness about local crafts and for this her aim is introducing personalization in the events through craft. Art and crafts in weddings with a personalized touch and handmade gifts is not a common trend in event planning in the Islamabad and Rawalpindi region. Mehvish’s clients are very confident of this incredible change and have welcomed her approach very warmly. Mehvish takes pride in presenting her craft-based events and work.

"We have diversity in arts and crafts. We have a strong traditional art and craft history, and then we have urban art so for me art and craft are a way of expressing oneself. It is very engaging and makes me and my events feel alive and tailored. I have witnessed a general increase in demand for craft supplies and personalized events by using art and craft and creating awareness about them. Studio Events is one major platform for event planning that is passionate about art. I also plan to introduce art and craft workshops because I know women, kids and even my many male clients are passionate about art."

For Mehvish, the best way of understanding any situation is through one’s experience. She takes a lot of help from her parents when it comes to judging a new scenario in business. Market knowledge is essential. She thinks that the Karachi market is more advanced than the Islamabad and Rawalpindi markets when it comes to using art and craft in events. She gets all her supplies from Karachi and some even from abroad. She has no direct competition for her gift boxes and art and craft relevant services. In fact, many event planners approach her for art and craft supplies for their events which she willingly provides.

Involving clients in event designing and planning is the main marketing strategy that Mehvish follows. She thinks a happier client makes the most impact, and that’s the only way to get more clients, other than through Facebook and her website.

"I put my heart into creating a unique and individual experience for each of my clients. I just want clients to remember how they felt after dealing with Studio Events and this becomes possible only when I know all the details, demands and wishes of my clients."
6.11.4 Case Summary

Studio Events is still in its early phase of development. Mehvish started it because she wanted to do something from her home. She has a daughter and for Mehvish her family is equally important. From Table 19 it can be seen that for Mehvish the business is more a lifestyle choice and not a financial necessity. She got the finances for raw material and launching her website from her husband. She mostly uses informal labor and also relies on her house helpers to prepare goodie bags and wrapping gifts and return gifts. She is using the upper portion of her house as her office and workshop where she keeps all her raw material for preparing gift boxes. For events she relies on her husband and parents’ networks as they are running their own furniture business. She aims to develop her business in the future, but her resource mobilization activities are very small and so the pace of her business development is very slow.

Table 19 Resource Mobilization in Studio Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Cash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capability Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Constraints</strong></td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 12: Party Place

Party Place is an event planning firm started by Umaira in 2010. Party Place arranged birthday events and its themes included everything from dishware to decorations and covered all familiar characters/themes such as Winnie the Pooh, Dora and Barbie. Party Place has themed plates, cups, napkins, flag banners, caps, pinatas, table covers, balloons and goodie boxes(filled). It also did theme decor, personalized banners, invites, themed cutouts and cupcake picks. Umaira also made costumes on order. However, now Umaira has joined the marketing department of a telecom company and has switched careers. She is not doing event planning anymore.

6.12 Resource Mobilization in Party Place

6.12.1 Resource Identification

Umaira thinks event planning is not possible without information and doing detailed homework on the market, clients, resources and social values. However, this is a time-consuming process. She did it for six years and then switched to a job in the telecom sector.

"I like doing business because then I am my own boss, but I will do a job for the next 3-4 years because the event planning business demands a lot of time so for now, I will focus on my job."

Umaira restricted Party Place’s operations to Islamabad. She offered her services to people who approached her with some references. She said that she did not do any marketing herself. She started the business because of her passion and not for earning to meet her expenses. She further shared that if she increased her operations to other cities, it would increase the costs for her customers.

"Even though there is a big market in Pindi but my operations were only in Islamabad because if I expanded my operations to other cities, then I would have needed more information on labor, products, resources and the market and doing this would have definitely increased the costs for customers."

Umaira also shared that event planning is not possible without complete homework and information gathering about the market and resources. However, the revenue generated is nothing compared to all the work that goes in.

"I personally think event planning is interesting but very hard work. The payoff is not much as compared to the inputs and work that we event planners do. The rewards are mostly intangible respect and clients being happy when they are satisfied with my work but, of course, tangible rewards are also important and these are not enough as compared to the effort put in."

Umaira says that local people do not understand the event planning business. They think that it starts and ends with décor. However, she stressed that it is a proper business that demands professionalism, creativity and time. She shared
some situations where people did not give due respect to her. She added that she did not like clients arguing for a few bucks when demanding the best quality and unique concepts and ideas. This is not fair to event planners and entrepreneurs according to Umaira. She thinks that proper rules, regulations and professionalism by entrepreneurs will change local mindsets. Some scenarios regarding this situation are:

"People do not understand the event planning business. Planning an event takes hours; it takes your night and days. They bargained for five rupees for a goodie bag to make it 125 PKR from 120 PKR. When they did this, I would be like hey why are they getting it done at a good place, with the best theme and best quality? Also, the margins are not big in birthday events."

"Time management is a big challenge and since people do not understand event planning in Pakistan, they think we are informal and can arrange anything at any time. This is not true as we need time to plan, create, design, discuss and execute any event. Recently somebody called me up at 8 in the morning and he said, please arrange a jumping castle and magic show for my school function today around 11 am. I was quite surprised. I explained that I could not arrange things in the blink of an eye but that person kept insisting. People don't know what event planning is, and we need to profile our businesses more professionally so that citizens take event planning with more seriousness and with a professional mind."

Umaira mostly used the web and Facebook to collect information on competitors and their services, offers and packages. To collect information about vendors and labor she used references and friends and did not make any effort to collect information about resources and the market on her own other than doing it on the internet.

6.12.2 Resource Gathering

6.12.2.1 Family

After starting Party Place, Umaira’s family continued to help her. Her husband and mother played important roles in supporting Umaira to run her business morally and financially. Other than that, her friends and networks helped in marketing it in the Islamabad region.

"I managed to do most things on my own and if I needed help it was mostly in-house. For example, my cousin is doing a degree in arts, so I asked her to come and give me a hand in many things for planning and executing an event."

Party Place was bought by Umaira from another event planner who was running it and had some tables, chairs and balloons etc. Umaira’s husband motivated her run the business morally but also provided her finances.

6.12.2.2 Volunteering

People also volunteered often to help run Umaira’s business. "Somebody contacted me on Facebook on the Party Place page and said that she wanted to work in event planning,
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so I asked her 2-3 times. This kept on rolling and things were managed as friends, family or interested people volunteered.

6.12.2.3 Third-Party Collaborations

However, Umaira did not have any third-party collaborations because she does not trust collaborations. She explained, "The current trend in the market is that entrepreneurs collaborate with other event planning entrepreneurs. For example, they have collaborations with farmhouses and with courier services. People asked me to collaborate, but I do not trust it as I think it is not profitable. Further, if I collaborate and individuals do not want to invest in it then they will learn from me but what do I get from them?"

6.12.2.4 Personal Efforts

Umaira ran Party Place’s operations as a one-person show. She managed things on her own and had no permanent staff. She had volunteer labor.

"I arranged most of the events on my own. I have interest in arts and crafts also, I am quite a creative person. I know fabric printing so for birthdays I designed and printed banners, goody bags and themes myself. This is something that I had been doing even before starting the event planning business."

6.12.3 Resource Utilization

Umaira discussed the importance of information about resources and the market. However, she said she could not collect a lot of information because:

"A business needs information about working, networks and demand but seriously I did not think that I would be taking it too far. I was doing many things on my own. I needed employees on a permanent basis to run a business and for maintaining it properly. I needed more people to ease the process of getting information about the market, audience and competition. So many things were my brainchild, and I knew how I do many things in my business. If I employed somebody else, they might not be able to do it the way I wanted to do it. It is not easy to get your ideas across to anyone’s mind and execution is even more challenging as opposed to doing it yourself."

Umaira firmly believes that experience is the only tool to find out what is good and what is not for the business. Umaira shared that she was quite naive when she started her event planning business. However, with experience she now knows how to handle information regarding clients, projects, market and social norms. She shared that experience taught her many valuable skills and lessons and now she can evaluate the situation and can decide better. She said:

"It has happened to me quite often that people take ideas and then they do not respond. I mean I go and visit their homes or venues for events and discuss all details and everything but after getting all the ideas they tell me that they are not interested. If people want to turn back, then they should not ask for ideas. This needs to be rectified through ethics and more professionalism. I was not good at public dealing at the start as I started this business without any experience. But now I have information on how to deal with clients and vendors and how
to move in the market. This is something that I learned and realized with time and now I ask them to get the booking done then I will share ideas because nobody has the right to take my time and energy and just walk away.”

6.12.4 Case Summary

Umaira started Party Place in 2010. Her husband provided the main moral and financial support. She ran Party Place for a few years before exited the business. This exit can be credited to very low resource mobilization activities. As shown in Table 20, and explained earlier, Umaira was skeptical of third-party collaborations. She believed in her own skills and wanted to handle and manage all activities on her own. Therefore, she relied on her personal efforts and on volunteers and informal labor occasionally for event planning and execution. This affected Party Place’s developmental pace. Umaira was not able to manage events on a broader scale. She restricted herself to birthday events for people she knew well. As she had to prepare everything herself, it was very tiring in comparison to monetary returns. She also felt that her child was getting less attention because of all the time that she had to put into event preparation. She decided to switch to a managerial job and exit her business.

Table 20 Resource Mobilization in Party Place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Identification</td>
<td>Resource Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>Cash.</td>
<td>Family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
<td>Volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Constraints</td>
<td>Raw materials, office Vendors. Venues.</td>
<td>Home based office. Informal labor. Clients selected venues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 13: Bia Interior

Bia Interior is Rabia’s initiative. Rabia is married and has one son. She is a speech therapist by profession. She was the first interpreter in Pakistan for deaf people. She quit as speech therapist because of non-recognition of this profession in Pakistan and low payments. After leaving her job, she became an event planner for a school. After that, she got interested in interiors and decided to increase her creative and designing skills. She believed that before entering the field, she should feel confident about the different aspects of design. She did several courses at local art schools Ryad and Hunarkada. She did courses in interior designing, 3D max google cache, AutoCAD and drafting. However, she was not satisfied with these courses, so she went to Dubai and took classes at Cholsey University. After completing this course, Rabia came back to Pakistan and started her small business informally under the name Bia Interior in 2013. As the name suggests Bia Interior provides interior designing and event planning services.

6.13 Resource Mobilization in Bia Interior

6.13.1 Resource Identification

Rabia regards information about the market, society and clients as crucial. If one wants to sail smoothly in business, then it is essential to get first-hand knowledge. Rabia follows the social media and blogs regularly to get inspiration for designing and creating themes for interior designing. She believes in grooming her skills rather than following competitors.

Rabia shared two main challenges for entrepreneurs, especially for women entrepreneurs. She thinks that local clients do not respect or trust entrepreneurs in general and more so women entrepreneurs.

"People do not give enough respect to entrepreneurs. They still have a mindset that doing jobs in multinationals is a big thing. Entrepreneurship as a career is still not widely accepted. For women entrepreneurs' things become even more complicated. As women we have the extra liability of having a cautious attitude while dealing with vendors and clients because if we do not people become judgmental about our reputation."

Trust was another challenge that Rabia discussed.

"Clients do not trust women entrepreneurs. It has often happened that people ask for ideas and consultations and later they do not respond. Most clients have this perception that males do this job better. It is surprising that people trust me for interior designing but when it comes to event planning, they do not. I think it has a lot to do with social stereotypes and labels that put males and females in separate work categories."

6.13.2 Resource Gathering

6.13.2.1 Family
Rabia’s husband is her biggest support both morally and financially. He helped Rabia in her education and getting certifications both locally and internationally in UK and Dubai. He launched her business and provided her office space and necessary resources. Recently Rabia started her interior designing and event planning business office in Dubai and again all expenses were paid by her husband. Rabia has not thought about any collaborations or panels. She just contacts vendors when required.

6.13.2.2 Informal labor
Informal labor is needed for the events which is readily available. Bia Interior does not have permanent staff; Rabia mostly uses informal labor for her events and designing projects.

6.13.3 Resource Utilization
Rabia shared that her approach to event planning comes from interior designing and this provides her a unique ability of being both a planner and a designer.

"I can see clients' likes and dislikes or should I say I know them by heart because I need to design an event. I also know sourcing details, vendors, florists and event schedules as I am an event planner. I think this ability to switch roles provides a perfect combination. I have also designed bouquets in the absence of a florist; this combination is not so common in the local market."

From Rabia’s point of view, event planning is about designing and about converting imagination to reality. This is not possible without relevant skills and experience. Certifications and experience enhance entrepreneurial abilities in evaluating any scenario. Certifications and experience are tools for assessing the accuracy and quality of the information.

"Being aware of a client’s needs and being equipped with necessary skills and certifications is integral. However, an evaluation of these requirements and information are also integral as evaluation is involved in everything we do. That is how we identify and measure our performance. However, my evaluation processes are not sophisticated. I review the gathered information, its sources, project characteristics and goals but its only me and I ask my husband to guide me."

"Market knowledge about vendors, lighting crew, furniture, fabrics, panels, logistics and photographers is also crucial," says Rabia. Rabia suggests that her skill set in interior designing is transferable to event planning and this gives her an additional edge in collecting information about décor items and resources.

Rabia follows her clients very carefully. She provides consultations, shopping and installations and also prints cards, draws up event timelines and venue decisions in her packages.
Overview of Cases

"I adore designing, and when I create events, I see the client’s personality. I think everything should go hand in hand -- clients, events and designing. I create living spaces that reflect a client’s personality and that’s it."

6.13.4 Case Summary

Bia Interior is an interior designing venture. Rabia is a qualified person. She is a speech therapist, interior designer and event planner not only by passion but also by qualification. She has diplomas in event planning and designing from Dubai. She started her venture in Rawalpindi with her husband’s moral and financial support. As is evident in Table 21 Bia Interior is also an example of lifestyle entrepreneurship like Studio Events. Rabia has the qualifications and she wanted to try her hand at the event planning business. For this her husband helped her with all the expenses, office, networks and project offers. She relies on informal labor and her personal efforts and skills to provide consultations for event designing and for preparing events. However, last year she shifted her business to Dubai and she is doing event planning projects in Dubai because she had offers from the school where she did her diploma. Again, her husband provided her with all the investments and labor force. Resource mobilization activities are minimal in this case because Rabia is getting all the financial help from her husband. The only constraint she felt was social acceptance of female entrepreneurship in Pakistan and lack of trust in female event planners.
### Table 21 Resource Mobilization in Bia’s Interior

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<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
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<td>Resource Identification</td>
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<td>Capability Constraints</td>
<td>Skills, labor.</td>
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<td>Capacity Constraints</td>
<td>Time, raw materials, office.</td>
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<td>Social Constraints</td>
<td>Cultural acceptance.</td>
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Case 14: ADS Events

ADS Events is an event management firm owned by Adnan Sheikh. It was launched in 2005. Adnan and his cousin had a guest house in Islamabad which they for foreigners for 13 years. Considering the conditions in the market and very few foreign visitors and tourists in Islamabad they switched their business to event planning. The event planning idea came from a family wedding that Adnan had arranged. Adnan had savings and networks, so he launched his new business under the name ADS Events Management in 2005. ADS Events has a diverse portfolio. It does weddings, birthdays, corporate events, concerts, artist management and fashion shows. Recently it has also started offering interior designing services.

6.14 Resource mobilization in ADS Events

6.14.1 Resource Identification

Information seeking is given due importance by the ADS Events team. "Event planning is about ideas and ideas come from information and knowledge."

The ADS Events team collects information on events like themes, ideas and concepts from the internet. To know about the market, vendors and the competition it uses the web and social media. Another common way is collecting information from peers and business owners. "We design our events; we do not just execute them. Each and every event should be designed uniquely and to do this we use diverse information and knowledge about different resources and creative concepts. We write our ideas and then do our homework on these thoughts and check the viability of the idea considering resources and knowledge. We take inspiration and details from the internet and other event planners and then design our final ideas."

Experience is the best teacher according to the ADS Events team. ADS believe that creativity is one part, but realistic choices are another side of a successful opportunity. Any opportunity that is successful should be realistic enough to meet clients’ desires and needs. This evaluation of opportunities and correct information comes with time; experience teaches entrepreneurs how to evaluate the right information, scenario and situation. On these lines one relevant example that the team shared was when they chose crystal for an event.

“For one of our events, we chose crystal and delicate stuff like glass to make an especially elegant theme, but we forgot to check the road leading to the venue. Parts of the road were broken and the conditions of an alternative path to the destination was the same. Some of our stuff was broken and we arranged it in an emergency from local sources, Of course, this affected the overall theme and event. Our time management was also affected so we basically learned that our homework and detailed information for designing an event was not enough as we also needed
to know about the locality, surroundings and infrastructure availability. Now we also look into all these aspects."

"Experience taught us teamwork, communication and coordination skills in arranging events. We arrange events in parts, but at the end its one whole event that is a success and our information about every part is central in this success."

Other than this, ADS Events also has a regular way of discussing everything collectively not only formally but also in a friendly and informal way. This improves their ability to evaluate decisions. Peers are also a great help in evaluating different situations. For example, Rizwan’s mother is a great inspiration and help in guiding and advising when it comes to evaluating different scenarios.

Major challenges that the team discussed were replication of ideas and copyrights issues. As there is no policy for patents and copyright ADS Events take care of this matter in a different way.

"We ask our clients to come to our event before it starts. For example, if it is starting at 19.30, we invite them to visit at 19 and show them everything. They see our way of working, designing, planning, the concept and ideas. Hence we manage to spread practices about ethics and originality to some extent."

Another challenge is uneducated informal labor. Informal labor is employed in the event industry regularly. However, this labor is mostly uneducated and that can be costly and risky.

"It's routine work for daily wage labor as they need work which could be anything, so they are not concerned with the delicacy and finer details of event planning. This is a huge risk that we take every day because we need these people, but it can be very costly and risky if we do not work closely with the daily wage labor."

Creativity is a big challenge for maintaining an edge in the event planning industry. To deal with this challenge ADS Events hires youngsters to gather information about the market and clients.

"The traditional hotel industry lost out in the event planning market because of creativity issues. For example, they have the same halls for their events. They also have the same lights, the same furniture and there is lack of customization. On the other hand, we have no resources as compared to the hotels and wedding houses but in marquees we get space and margins to bring new and creative ideas every time. However, keeping up with creative and innovative ideas is a big challenge."

6.14.2 Resource Gathering

6.14.2.1 Personal Efforts

ADS Events Management was started with Adnan and Rizwan’s savings. They exited their previous guest house business and had good networks, clients, savings and reputation. Now they have a permanent team of 21 people.
6.14.2.2 Informal Labor

Informal labor is a huge part of the ADS Events team. They need it for setting up the venue, transporting the inventory and cleaning, among other things. It uses daily wage labor. ADS pay extra attention to taking care of the informal labor because no event can be completed without their generous help.

6.14.2.3 Third-party collaborations

ADS Events collaborates with other event planners and helps them arrange resources. It also takes help from other event planners in case of an emergency through third-party collaborations. An example that the partners shared is that they had to decorate 160,000 flowers in 19 hours. This was made possible with the help of extra labor. This additional labor was arranged through third-party collaborations.

6.14.2.4 Panels

ADS Events is on the panel of different event planners who own marquees. So, when there is an event it contacts one of these event planners to arrange for marquees and deras (deras are flexible while marquees are fixed; marquees are waterproof while deras are not 100 percent waterproof). Other people like carpenters, vendors and fiberglass experts are also on ADS’ panel.

6.14.2.5 Contracts

ADS Events has a policy of hiring youngsters and fresh business and marketing graduates. For this it has contracted with universities. This is a practice that is encouraged at ADS Events because it feels that youngsters provide fresh and creative ideas and unique help in designing events. In return, fresh graduates get internships and experience certificates for nominal monetary rewards.

6.14.3 Resource Utilization

ADS Events follows the tradition of designing events instead of just replicating previous events, and it claims that this is possible through proper knowledge and detailed information about the market and clients.

Another example that reflects the importance of information in a new situation is when ADS experimented with a new type of stage for an event. "For one of our events, we had an idea that we should increase the height of the stage. Usually it's around 24 feet high but we decided to make it three times higher and the final product was around 65 feet high. The client trusted us and asked us to go ahead. We planned it very well so that everything would happen elegantly and within given budget we ordered fabric, panels and flowers after searching carefully among our vendors and after proper budgeting. Our idea was a success and was liked by everyone."
Information about the market is most crucial for executing events. Knowledge about the competition, political conditions and pricing, make the worth of any business clear. ADS position itself after becoming fully aware of the market conditions.

"It's vital to be aware of our market. What is happening is that people show pictures and tell clients that they can replicate them and that too at a lesser cost. However, we do not say that we will reproduce the pictures. In fact, we say that we design events which means that we plan the events and it does not matter if it is for 1 lakh or for 40 lakh PKR as our design will be unique. This can happen only when all the details and facts about the market are on our finger tips."

"Good knowledge and information lead to quality and perfection. For example, if we are going to another city like Mirpur, Kashmir we will calculate transportation, labor and fuel costs. Another thing is the seasonal situation and pricing. For example, if an event booked in Mirpur for February three months in advance then we need to take in account the high costs for flowers in February. This means that we should have detailed information about the locality, seasonal pricing and political conditions at the destination."

Following the market closely also helps in arranging resources in an urgent situation. The ADS team said:

"In one of our events, we had to put 160,000 flowers for 19 hours for which we needed extra labor. Here our knowledge about arranging additional labor at a short notice from other event planners helped us in completing the task in time."

ADS follows its clients very carefully as it is very flexible in its ability to give each client a unique design.

"First thing to know about the client is the budget and the next thing is the timing of the event. When we know the budget, we design accordingly. We can do events in marquees, canopies, lawns, homes, anywhere. The important thing is to customize and design the event, so we work with our clients as our own family. It's a once in a lifetime moment for our clients and we also treat our events as we would functions in our family. Other than resources, budgets and clients’ wishes and demands, it is also important to know the timing of the event and whether it is a day event or a night event as both these will be designed differently. For example, we cannot put lights for a day event and even the weather is different during the day and night, so all information should be gathered and followed properly for proper execution of an event."

### 6.14.4 Case Summary

ADS was started in 2005 by Adnan and his cousin who had been running a guest house for 13 years. However, the guest house for foreigners was not doing well because the city did not get many tourists because of terrorism. They first informally started ADS Events. The main resources (Table 22), that the two invested in the business came from what they had earned in the guest house business. They sold the guest house and invested the money in buying an office, raw materials and furniture. For manpower they relied on informal labor and being on different panels. After they managed to get a good reputation, they entered into contracts with universities for hiring fresh young graduates in their
team. They also developed third-party collaborations not only to help other event planners but also to get help from them.

### Table 22 Resource Mobilization in ADS Events

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<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Resource Mobilization Strategy</th>
<th>Resource Utilization</th>
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<td>Resource Gathering</td>
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<td>Informal labor, third-party collaborations, panels, contracts, personal skills and efforts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Constraints</td>
<td>Raw materials, office.</td>
<td>Arranged through the previous business and accumulated over time.</td>
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Case 15: Eventox

Eventox was started by Shahid Ali in 2010. Eventox was Shahid’s final year MBA project. The project was appreciated by Shahid’s teachers and friends who motivated him to start his own event planning business. Considering the job situation in the market Shahid decided to follow their advise and launched Eventox informally.

6.15 Resource mobilization in Eventox

6.15.1 Resource Identification

Shahid believes that he was successful because he did good market research. Market competition, demands and clients’ profiles were things he looked at before starting his business. The main source of information was social media, blogs, websites and Facebook as these are the easiest ways of gathering and spreading information.

Friends and peers like Shahid's teacher’s sister, are also permanent sources of information. Proper research and surveys on the market conditions and industry profile were another strategy that Eventox used for gathering information in the starting phase.

"It was my final year project for MBA, and I did a lot of research and collected information on the market and industry. I knew people wanted someone to take over their events, so I started looking at the services that were being offered in the market and what resources were available.”

According to Shahid the government’s inefficiency and customers’ attitude to entrepreneurship are big challenges for entrepreneurship development.

Other important challenges are that wealth is concentrated in a few hands and Pakistan also has the class system. Big business families create monopolies and seize opportunities from small entrepreneurs. For example:

"You would have seen marquees in E11 in a row. About 17-18 big business families have invested millions in them so small entrepreneurs like me do not stand anywhere as these big giants will eat up our businesses. What they have also started doing is that do not just book our venue space but book everything from like food and décor this has started happening over the last two years. One marquee cost 400 million PKR. One way is for entrepreneurs to collaborate with marquee owners but people like me who are self-made cannot compete with them."

6.15.2 Resource Gathering

Shahid's sister supported his ideas, concept and themes. Friends helped in researching and gathering information about the market. For starting Eventox
Shahid’s teacher helped by not only encouraging Shahid but he also provided with a guideline for the project. Shahid had work experience with a US based company in Pakistan where he managed events. His previous employer also helped him in his business.

"In the start, I had nothing, just a business plan. My previous employer provided me with office space in F 11 because my mentor and my previous employer had started his NGO Kamyab Pakistani. I met my clients there and launched many events from that office. In return, I helped my mentor with his NGO’s business operations.

Shahid earned well and in a year time he had rented an office opposite his previous office and continued to help his mentor in his business. When Eventox became popular and his mentor’s Ngo settled down both the entities became independent.

Shahid has no collaborations or student volunteers. He does not appreciate putting the student in such work; he thinks they deserve more as what they earn here is very less. He also believes in reducing expenses to the minimum where possible, so instead of putting other people in the chain he does most of the work himself. Another way of reducing expenses is:

"I prefer lowering Eventox’s expenses to a minimum. For example, in my office, my electricity cost is zero because I have solar panels."

### 6.15.3 Resource Utilization

Eventox is supposed operate locally and it has no intention of expanding to other areas. The main reason for not expanding is that Shahid believes that he knows his region and the system there and he is more comfortable with this setup. If he starts in a new place, then he will need to work on a new market and resources. So, the main thing is maintaining the existing business in the local region as he has enough information to keep running Eventox.

"I can do my work here in a much better way. I know the system and I do not need to register the business as I have an NTN, but I use it only when I have to work with the government. Our processes for doing business are very complicated and that is why people do not register their businesses; they only do so when they are successful."

It is important to know about local laws and regulations before entering the event planning industry. Eventox was started informally and had no legal registration with local authorities. Once Shahid faced problems in organizing an event because of Eventox’s informal status. He had a concert with a public university which paid 70 percent of the money in advance. After the concert the university did not pay the rest of the amount because of Eventox’s informal status. The university administration explained that Eventox has no NTN. Shahid was not aware of this and he consulted his friend who advised and offered his company’s NTN number and Shahid’s invoice was cleared. His lack of information led Shahid to a problematic situation, but his friend helped him solve the problem.
“NTN numbers are not simple tax numbers. They are quite complicated where you have to show your income and that you pay taxes. Then you need to arrange a finance company that will do quarterly audits this auditor will contact all your clients. You need certificates from the audit company that the tax you paid was accurate. These certificates have to be submitted with the government. It is a costly and time consuming process and keeps moving in circles so entrepreneurs avoid it.”

Experience is a main tool that can help in evaluating different situations, scenarios and details. Shahid got help from his sister and teacher to decide on different things. His teacher helped him in starting and establishing the business and mentored Shahid. Shahid’s sister helped in the evaluation of concepts, themes and ideas.

When Shahid started his business, he collected information about the market. He found that middlemen between clients and event planning firms took away a lot of profits and commissions and thus lowered sales revenues. So, he decided to follow another approach in his business.

"When I started in 2010, event planners were not doing marketing using the social media and Facebook. They were using advertising agencies to reach their clients. What I did was that I started looking for clients by reading local pages in newspapers and started reading blogs, following the news and latest trends after researching for three months I had good knowledge of the market and clients and I started spreading information about Eventox through my Facebook page and on social media. It was a huge hit and I started and grew my business in no time because of this innovative approach."

However, after some years Shahid started feeling that the market had saturated with many event planners and the clients too had become aware of the options that they had. Hence, it not easy to develop his business in such a tough situation because the government does not help entrepreneurs to start, survive or develop their businesses.

"Pakistan has a lot of talent. We also have skills but our government has no active role in promoting entrepreneurs and nor do we have the support of the law or policies. There are no proper tax regulations or systems. Our clients think that we are quoting high prices for events, but they do not know that we have to pay taxes. Clients do not trust us because of our inefficient institutional policies."

Shahid started his business with great passion, but after a few years he is disappointed because of inefficient institutional policies and laws. He thinks that the government is indifferent to entrepreneurs and is not working for boosting small businesses and entrepreneurship.

"Customers are now aware of the event planning industry and the competition that exists and know that they have choices. When it comes to an understanding of the work and its true essence, they think that it’s just décor. But it is not like this, we create events, we coordinate with food caterers, labor, florists, clients, guests and venue organizers. We arrange resources and convert raw ideas and imagination to reality. We work days and nights to make that the event becomes the best memory for our clients but when it comes to returns and rewards, they just tell us that we charged so much but we didn’t put our heart into the event. Basically, the returns are low
as compared to the effort we put in an event because people are not aware of the details in planning an event."

Shahid shared some stereotypes in the Pakistani society about businesses. He said that Pakistani give due status to big businesses and do not consider small businesses worth their while. He stressed that knowing the society is important, because, "it gives legitimacy to pursue anything." He also thinks that knowing social values and societal stereotypes will help in changing the stereotypes. "Our local stereotypes about business have been there for decades and I think this is due to contradictory government policies on small businesses and big companies. The government supports business families like we have 17 or 18 business families that are have been in business since Pakistan's inception. Most of the wealth is concentrated in these families. Another stereotype is that some people are labeled as good business persons. For example, they say that Sheikhs are excellent business people while other castes are not good enough for business and so on and so forth. That is why you see some strong business families, and they are there always."

Another thing discussed by Shahid was distributing favors among relatives, even if they do not deserve them. He shared that businesses in were not favoring young, educated kids. They do not give them good positions and instead hire them for nominal wages and for commissioned based jobs. Fresh graduates accept these jobs because of social pressures and do not get to know their true potential. Society gives due status to jobs but not to entrepreneurship and small businesses. In short, the Pakistani society is not appreciative of small businesses and makes it difficult for small entrepreneurs to stay passionate about pursuing their interests and endeavors.

### 6.15.4 Case Summary

Shahid started Eventox after graduating from college. He did his MBA and like Hira (Revelations), Eventox was his final year project. As illustrated in Table 23 he got help from his family, teacher and mentor encouraged him to start Eventox which started well and Shahid earned good profits in a year. He developed many clients for Eventox. But he thinks that in 2015 the business market became saturated as a lot of event planners mushroomed in the country and most of them are doing similar work. Now the trend of marquees is eating small entrepreneurs. Shahid believed that not much can be done as marquee owners have huge investments. Shahid has no collaborations with his competitors. He is a jack of all trades and also does not have a management team. He relies on his personal skills and family support for ideas. Shahid is ready to give up his event planning business as soon as he finds a good job.
Table 23: Resource Mobilization in Eventox

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<td>established with</td>
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<td>space and necessary</td>
<td>the help of Shahid’s</td>
<td>the help of Shahid’s</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>equipment.</td>
<td>mentor.</td>
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<td>He provided Shahid</td>
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<td>with office space</td>
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<td>and necessary</td>
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<td>equipment in his</td>
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<td>NGO. In return</td>
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<td>Shahid worked for</td>
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<td>him.</td>
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</table>
6.16 Concluding Remarks

It is evident from the cases that most entrepreneurs started their businesses informally not only because of lack of resources but also to test the market through informal venturing. Finding resource is a big challenge for entrepreneurs regardless of their business status -- survival or growth. Many problems were discussed in the interviews done for the cases. Entrepreneurs agreed that government inefficiency and customer attitudes to entrepreneurship were big challenges in entrepreneurship development. These challenges were tougher for women entrepreneurs because of various gender and culture related stereotypes. These challenges also highlight the importance of appropriate and exhaustive search for resources to deal with constrained situations and resource scarcity.

The entrepreneurs also said that it was to tell the new entrants and the public that organizing resources was very difficult for small entrepreneurs so that more awareness and understanding can be generated.

The participants also shared that informal businesses in Pakistan by and large employ wage labor which is mostly uneducated. The challenges faced by informal enterprises are that the wage labor works with little or no education and can be costly and risky. Informal entrepreneurs should not aim to grab every opportunity because most of the time they fail as they make false commitments and wrong promises. Another challenge is lack of intellectual property rights. As there is no copyright law in Pakistan designs and ideas can be copied and even marketed in anyone else’s name. This not only affects the quality but also the development of businesses.

Informal entrepreneurs share the significance of searching for resources to uphold creativity in business as creativity is a big challenge for maintaining an edge. To deal with this challenge informal entrepreneurs hire youngsters for fresh ideas and to gather information about the market and clients as they cannot afford expensive though better qualified people.

The upshot of 15 informal micro enterprises in this chapter gathered different ways of identifying, gathering and utilizing resources. These three main activities are summarized in the form of tables after each case. The resource mobilization activities address the financial (cash), capability (skills, labor) and capacity (raw material, venue etc.) constraints.
This chapter presents a cross-case analysis. The findings are presented, analyzed, and examined in light of the existing literature. They are divided into three aggregated dimensions related to resource mobilization activities. In the literature review in Chapter 2, the building blocks of resource mobilization were discussed in terms of resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization. After the in-depth analysis of cases, these main activities of resource mobilization from the literature review were observed in greater depth, and this micro analysis yielded three aggregated dimensions from iterated coding. Resource mobilization activities in the cross-cases analysis are explained through the aggregated dimensions of recognition of resource need, accessing/sharing of required resources, and readiness to utilize resources effectively. The role of social and human capital is observed in these activities. Human capital is generic, entrepreneurship specific, and venture specific in this thesis. Entrepreneurship-specific human capital, i.e., knowledge about the business, resources, and market, plays an important role in the recognition of resource needs, and is generally gained through the information search activities of informal entrepreneurs. Venture-specific human capital is gained through informal venturing and is important in enhancing the readiness of informal entrepreneurs for effectively utilizing and identifying resources. Social capital is observed as connectedness among groups, i.e., bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding and bridging social capital are important sources in gathering resources and building a resource base among informal entrepreneurs. The research questions are summarized in the last section of this chapter.

7.1 Resource Mobilization across Cases

7.1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, in detail, the process by which informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources through human and social capital resources, employing content analysis (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). The data analysis process results in a three-level data structure indicating aggregate dimensions, second-order codes, and first-order codes. In this chapter, I present the empirical materials according to these three aggregated dimensions. The purpose here is to maintain a high level of qualitative rigor (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). The three levels of the data structure show how I progress from the primary data to the abstract theoretical level. The first-order codes present the data in the informant’s voice (Gioia et al., 2013; Van Maanen, 1979). The second-order codes represent “the theoretical realm” (Gioia et al., 2013; Van Maanen, 1979). The aggregate
dimensions indicate theoretical concepts. The implication is that the data and the theory should go hand in hand to ensure rigor. Through this data structure, I present how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources in the three aggregate dimensions, which also describe the three main phases of the resource mobilization process.

This chapter consists of three main parts that correspond to the three aggregate dimensions in the data structure. The first aggregate dimension demonstrates how informal entrepreneurs identify resources to embark on their entrepreneurial journey by illustrating the influencing trigger i.e. recognition of resource needs, to identify resources. The second aggregate dimension shows how resources are gathered through collaborations with groups and other competitor collaborations in the market. The third aggregate dimension describes how readiness of informal entrepreneurs helps in local resource utilization. In each aggregate dimension, I present themes as sources and activities (second-order codes) that integrate the dimension. In each theme of source and activity, I present first code(s) that integrate the theme. In each section on an aggregated dimension, I introduce selective relevant quotations and examples from the interviews in the text to support the resource mobilization process across cases. Tables presenting an overview of the findings and selected quotations from the interviews are also included at the end each section to strengthen the findings of this thesis. At the end of each part presenting an aggregate dimension, I provide concluding remarks, including a summary of the resource mobilization discussed. I integrate a short reflection on how such changes and influences are connected to the literature to illustrate the logic of theoretical abstraction from the first-order codes to the aggregate dimensions, as discussed above.

7.1.2 Data Structure

The data analysis results in the data structure, as illustrated in Figure 5. The data structure consists of the following three aggregate dimensions: (1) recognition of resource need; (2) accessing/sharing of resources; and (3) readiness to utilize local resources. The second-order codes and first-order codes are classified to illustrate the influences on the resource mobilization activities among informal entrepreneurs.

Aggregate dimension (1), recognition of resource need, is composed of the following two themes: sources and activity. Sources include resource constraints, i.e., varied business goals (social goals, controlling resource deficit, and business development), and foreseen/unforeseen events. The theme of the activity comprises information search.

Aggregate dimension (2), accessing/sharing of resources, is composed of the following themes: sources and activity. Sources for accessing and sharing resources are personal resources, bonding social capital, and bridging social capital. Another theme comprising this aggregated dimension is trust, which shapes collaborations. Trust builds up over time and accumulates social capital.
Aggregate dimension (3), readiness to utilize local resources, concerns the informal entrepreneur’s ability to be alert to local resources, the skill to recombine and repurpose local resources for effective utilization, and understanding of varied local resources. Readiness represents the relational conditions (Bygballe, Swärd, & Vaagaasar, 2016) of informal entrepreneurs to their local stakeholders and networks. A stronger relation means that informal entrepreneurs have more access to knowledge, resources, and the local market. This relational condition creates positive synergies over time, and results in more alert and skillful entrepreneurs (Bygballe et al., 2016). Readiness is nurtured through informal venturing activity. Informal venturing acts as human capital for informal entrepreneurs to gain the necessary training and knowledge for venture creation and venture management.

Informal entrepreneurship is exhibited at three different levels during these resource mobilization activities. The first phase of resource identification is mostly at the individual level, namely that informal entrepreneurs predominantly decide their resource needs through personal business goals and largely through personal information sources. The second level is the group level, such that informal entrepreneurs need to interact with their closed networks and form several collaborations to gather different types of resources to meet their resource needs. The third level is the societal level, at which interactions with the local community, human resources, norms, and values become crucial to understand and practice effective and socially legitimate utilization of resources.
Resource Mobilization across Cases Findings and Analysis

**First Order**
- Control progress towards resource scarcity
- Develop resource base
- Depend on partners to execute events within time and budget
- Quick solutions when things go unplanned during event preparation and execution
- Inadequate established means to execute event projects
- Search for new resources/opportunities
- Search for new partners/collaborations
- Search for demands, trends, themes in audience
- Event proposals in off seasons
- Personal Efforts, e.g., jobs, savings, reduced expenses etc.
- Personal networks that provide with social legitimacy, advice, initial funds, trust etc., Friends, Families, Employers
- Acquaintances to access resources, e.g., contracts, informal labor, volunteers, Internees, competitors collaborations
- Personal relationships
- Strong relationships
- Verbal informal contracts
- Understanding and agreement of working appropriate behaviors
- Alertness to reuse existing information resource
- Predicting resource potential and access
- Skills to commoditize immaterial resources of their context
- Social capital used to gain market share, social legitimacy, raw material
- Utilizing local informal labor and information sources to compete in market
- Unregistered business activity
- Gaining business experience and market knowledge
- Developing resource base
- Developing networks
- Testing market

**Second Order**
- Sources
  - Resource Constraint (Business goals, unforeseen event, uncertainty)
  - Personal resources, Bonding social capital (Family/friends), Bridging social capital (collaborations), Linking social capital (Powerful Contacts)
  - Alertness/predictability/skill to utilize local resources

- Activity
  - Information search (for networks, market, resources, Knowledge about required resources)
  - Trust promotes social collaborations among informal entrepreneurs, Sharing and reciprocal exchange of resources
  - Informal Venturing to gain knowledge and experience

- Accessing/Sharing Required Resources
- Recognition of Resource Need
- Readiness to Utilize Local Resources

**Aggregated Dimension**

*Figure 5 Data Structure*
7.2 Aggregate Dimension 1: Recognition of Resource Needs

Resource identification in the study started with the recognition of resource needs. Entrepreneurs’ identification of resource entails clear understanding of which resources are required (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). For this study, resource need recognition arises when an informal entrepreneur encounters a work-related problem that cannot be resolved through the stock of current resources. The identification of resource needs results from the set of actual or potential resources at one’s disposal (Bourgeois, 1981), relative to the perceived resource demand (George, 2005; Mishina, Pollock, & Porac, 2004).

It was essential to establish from the entrepreneurs whether they had ever experienced or encountered a need for resource identification in their work. Resource need recognition entails finding suitable resources that can facilitate the pursuit of business goals among informal entrepreneurs.

| First Order |
| Control progress towards resource scarcity |
| Develop resource base |
| Depend on partners to execute events within time and budget |
| Quick solutions when things go unplanned during event preparation and execution |
| Inadequate established means to execute event projects |
| Search for new resources/opportunities |
| Search for new partners/collaborations |
| Search for demands, trends, themes in audience |
| Event proposals in off seasons |

| Second Order |
| Source |
| Resource Constraint (Business goals, foreseen and unforeseen event, uncertainty) |

| Activity |
| Information search (for networks, market, resources, Knowledge about required resources) |

Aggregate dimension 1 (Excerpt from Data Structure in Figure 5)

This strategic recognition of resource need was described based on the participant’s business goals, the presence of resource constraints, and information from informal entrepreneurs. The recognition of resource needs started with defining resource needs according to business goals, and information about the business situation and the market. Broadly, three types of business goals were observed, i.e., business development, controlling resource deficit, and social goals, and ultimately these goals influenced resource needs. Once resource needs are set, informal entrepreneurs identify resources accordingly through information search. For example, if the business goal is to control resource deficit, informal entrepreneurs found temporary solutions to meet resource...
needs. Therefore, the identification of resources started with setting resource needs in the startup phase and accordingly had an influence on the resource mobilization behaviors of informal entrepreneurs.

Resource needs vary in each case for different projects as the event planning business, for example, usually works on a project basis. It was not possible to address all situations and scenarios. Therefore, resource needs in the startup phase were given due importance and then their effects on resource identification were analyzed. Once resource needs are established according to business goals and information search, informal entrepreneurs identify how they can access these resources. In the case of Royale, for example, Hammad undertook this task, and when he started to think about the business, he first checked the trends in the market. He found that the event planning business was something new and in demand. Then he did more searching and estimated that if he had a salary of six months in reserve, he could survive. After he had saved six months’ worth of salary, he left his job and set up an office in his home in the basement. However, his earlier attempts failed. He did more searching and sought more information. Then, he found that he needed to develop long-term collaborations with other competitive and established event planners to survive in the market. This was the right start and worked for Royale. Hammad obtained all the necessary resources from competitors, and in return they favored Hammad remaining at the front and developing and establishing his name. At this point, Hammad’s creativity in and knowledge of event design was identified as a major resource that left a mark in the client’s mind. This resource arrangement was maintained for few years, until Hammad established the Royale name and developed his own resource base, such as an office, a team, collaboration, and skills in event production, etc.

7.2.1 Source: Resource Constraints

The internal organizational constraints identified by Dolmans et al. (2017) are resource constraints, i.e., financial, capacity, and capability constraints. Financial constraints are related to monetary and cash scarcity, capacity constraints are operational constraints, i.e., the capacity to provide produce services or products, and capability constraints comprise a lack of relevant human resources available to entrepreneurs. The informal entrepreneurs I studied exhibited all three types of constraints mentioned by Dolmans et al. (2017). In terms of their business goals, I labeled these controlling resource deficit, business development, and social goals (business as a hobby).

Entrepreneurs have various ways of identifying the resources necessary to deal with resource constraints. When they perceive they are falling short of resources, they lower the resource demand and abandon existing plans for growth (Dolmans et al., 2017). However, when they have abundant resources, they prefer business growth and development plans (Dolmans et al., 2017). When an entrepreneur perceives resource constraints, (s)he may determine that the situation demands control of the resource deficit (Baker & Nelson, 2005). In the
same situation, another entrepreneur might perceive some form of resource munificence and pursue firm growth strategies (Edelman & Yli-Renko, 2010).

Controlling resource deficit was a situation in which the informal entrepreneurs predominantly faced all three constraints, i.e., financial, capability, and capacity constraints. Therefore, the informal entrepreneurs in this case were continuously trying to limit their expenses, and to manage and execute events with a reduced labor force and through extensive use of bonding social capital, i.e., through financial help and moral support from family and friends in different situations. The group with business development goals was the one that experienced relatively few capability constraints. It had sufficient financial capital and capabilities to run its events. This group engaged in the most collaborations and provided resources to new entrants and event planners with a low resource base through such collaborations.

Social goals were an aspect in which some participants did not identify business goals as crucial as for them the business was more of a hobby or quality lifestyle. Nonetheless, they aimed to make their business socially legitimate and to earn the label of the “noble citizen.” Such participants followed society, social roles, and expectations very carefully, e.g., Rabia for Bia interiors and Mehvish for Studio events. Another unique example was Bilal, in the case of Royale, who worked with Hammad informally as a friend and did not ask for any monetary benefits, but rather sought to satisfy his creative mindset. The major constraints for this group in terms of social goals were not financial but associated with capability and capacity.

I focused on business goals in the startup phase to understand resource identification. I noticed that even if resource scarcity was present in almost all cases, the business goals for the businesses differed. Moreover, I found a change in business goals only in the case of Royale Event Planners, i.e., the business goal changed from controlling the resource deficit to business development in the pre-startup and startup phases, but there was no change in the overall business goals in the rest of the sample. While informal entrepreneurs who start with a low resource base may have a business goal to control resource scarcity and later progress to business development when resources are gathered, others, such as ADS Occasions, might start with a low resource base but maintain their goal from the very start to develop the business. Therefore, resource needs were recognized accordingly.

7.2.2 Activity: Information Search

The prior findings within the broader entrepreneurship research suggest that entrepreneurial human capital, i.e., prior knowledge, influences the ways in which firms judge opportunities, and identify networks and resources (Cai et al., 2014). Entrepreneurial knowledge and information help entrepreneurs to make choices to shape opportunities accordingly (Sonenshein, 2014). Entrepreneurial knowledge is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs enter strategic
networking (Cai et al., 2014), access resources (Baker et al., 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (Salunke et al., 2011), or shape social meanings in contextual settings (Mair & Marti, 2009).

The information search undertaken by informal entrepreneurs, i.e., the ability to locate appropriate resources, played a central role in accessing knowledge about the market and business, as well as resources corresponding to resource needs. Informal entrepreneurs can be active searchers of information themselves or can be passive searchers, relying on external information, namely information from peers, networks, etc. This information was collected based on different criteria: competition, demand, supply, society, market, vendors, cost, events, culture, human resources, clients, etc. Information search activity was performed through different tangible and intangible information channels.

The findings suggest that information search behaviors help to understand particular means of resource need recognition. Searches can be conducted through different information channels – tangible and intangible – to gather relevant information. Tangible, or physical, sources of information observed in the sample were documents and organizations. Such documents included policies and laws relevant to taxes, no objection certificates (NOCs), public venues, and national tax numbers (NTNs.) Intangible sources of information included social media, friends, family, trial and error, the physical environment, social knowledge, local events observation, and tacit knowledge. Intangible channels and sources of information were informal and social in nature. They were mostly accessed through personal networks and connections and were readily available to the informal entrepreneurs investigated in the study.

The informal entrepreneurs in the study were insiders of the community, and predominantly availed themselves of and relied on intangible information channels and sources. Calling on friends and family members for advice and for help with setting up events is a way of seeking informal information. Information exchange happens during client meetings by sharing success stories. Community-level information sharing occurs in collaborative projects among event planners. A great deal of information reaches different stakeholders in the community through social media, and this is the most useful means of spreading or retrieving diverse information in no time.

There was an indication that participants could find information search burdensome because they were always in control and also had to attend to resource constraints. Another concern for the participants in attending to information search was that they described having a guilty conscience or blaming themselves when resource constraints progressed. Conversely, participants delegating information seeking to peers and networks could risk their businesses. Participants who solely thought about being receptive to information signals, e.g., through business networks, seemed unlikely to develop tailored resources, evaluate advice, or seek additional help when constraints progressed or in the case of failure. For example, some participants (Eventox, Party Place) lived with constrained situations for years because they believed that no solution existed.
Table 24 Resource Needs Recognition (Founding Phase)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Resource Needs Recognition (Founding Phase)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royale</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occasions</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>ADS</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miradore</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flower King</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutshell</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERD</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revelations</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potter's Wheel</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craft Manager</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Party Place</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventox</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Events</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bia Interiors</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 25 Quotes for Resource Needs Estimation

**Resource Needs Recognition (Founding Phase)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Development Needs</th>
<th>Controlling Resource Deficit Needs</th>
<th>Social Needs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I always keep on searching what is coming next, I need to differentiate otherwise we are dead. (Flower King)</td>
<td>I want to develop and grow my business, that’s my first option, but you know there are now big market players with a huge resource base, so they would not let us &quot;small entrepreneurs&quot; grow. (Eventox)</td>
<td>I have kids and family responsibilities, so I do not market to find projects on my own. I need to give time to my kids and I can arrange events from my home. (Studio Events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We all are responsible for our destinies. When I had plans to start my own business, I quit my job and started my office in my basement because I knew there were opportunities in the market. (Hammad from Royale Event Management)</td>
<td>So why should I always seek information? I do it when it is required. (Eventox)</td>
<td>For me, it is a hobby, so I do not work on marketing it. I do not seek networks. I do my homework on my signed projects only. I will do it my way and I plan to shift it to Dubai shortly. (Bia Interiors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had difficulties at the start of our business and we decided that we would find our opportunities and solutions. (ADS Events)</td>
<td>I did not get any help from anyone, nobody helps me. I knew what I must do, and I believe in myself. I am not a big name, but I knew Potter’s Wheel would be something one day. (Potter’s Wheel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is always a peak season for events. In off seasons we propose and organize our events, e.g., concerts of artists, so we work regularly in looking for demands, trends, and themes in public. (OEM)</td>
<td>I have a daughter. I have now my bank job. I will probably consider selling my business as I cannot focus on many things. If I do, it would be only my existing clients. (Party Place)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7.2.3 Reflection and Concluding Remarks on Aggregate Dimension 1: Recognition of Resource Needs

Aggregate dimension (1), concerning resource needs, triggers resource identification, showing that informal entrepreneurs have varied resource needs. These resource needs are recognized according to business goals and the information available to informal entrepreneurs. Resource needs recognition is a dynamic and ongoing activity. Once the business grows and matures from the startup phase, resource needs change, and informal entrepreneurs identify new resources according to resource needs and business goals. This is clearly seen in the example of Royale Event Planners.

Analysis of the process of resource needs recognition showed that informal entrepreneurs searched and evaluated the pros and cons of resources, the market, social legitimacy, clients, etc., through different tangible and intangible information channels. Ardichivili et al. (2003) and DeTienne & Chandler (2004) consider the importance of informed entrepreneurs for opportunity identification. In this thesis, the importance of entrepreneurial knowledge and information is supported and extended to the recognition of resource needs recognition and identification of resources. Baker and Nelson (2005, p. 359) suggested that entrepreneur’s knowledge of resources is as important as identifying opportunities and is crucial in embracing new opportunities and problems.

This information search activity could be performed by entrepreneurs or information can be provided or gathered by peers or social networks. Informal entrepreneurs evaluated information against their business goals and considered the benefits and effects of resources. This finding confirms the arguments from existing literature that well-informed entrepreneurial thinking brings entrepreneurial returns and is beneficial for the judgment of resource definition and resource combinations (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Feldman et al., 2011, Fiet et al., 2013; Gaddeffors & Anderson, 2009; McGrath & MacMillan, 2000; Sonenshein, 2014).

Furthermore, resource choice has significant implications for venture survival and development; indeed, many ventures fail each year as they cannot identify appropriate resources (Brush et al., 2001). Participants who accorded less importance to the recognition of resource needs often had difficulties in integrating proper resource mobilization actions; for example, in the case of Party Place, Eventox, Studio Events and Bia Interiors resource mobilization behaviors were adopted on and off. Craft Manager and Occasions were two cases that started informally in the same year, 2011. Craft Manager is still in the early stage of development and Kanwal lacks a resource base. Her major target has been to control resource scarcity, relying on her personal resources and closes networks, including bond capital and a few project-based collaborations entailing minimal bridging social capital to achieve the major goals of resource mobilization. In contrast, Occasions has become an influential event planning business.
Occasions has a very influential collaboration with one of its major competitors, Monal, a hotel chain with a huge resource base. Occasions brings event business to Monal, and in return gains the clients, venues, and resources required for event production. This has worked optimally for Occasions, and now it has bought its own halls in Islamabad and has shifted its office from Rawalpindi to Islamabad, in close proximity to the event planning cluster in E11, to reap the benefits of the event planning network. The difference in these two cases starts right from the recognition of resource needs for the business. Occasions started very small, but the route to resource mobilization through extensive knowledge of the market, networks, and collaboration with a competitor, and associated gains in skills and training led to the successful execution of resource mobilization to fulfill business goals.

7.3 Aggregate Dimension 2: Accessing and Sharing Resources

Informal entrepreneurs gather resources depending upon their resource needs. Apart from personal resources, resource gathering among informal entrepreneurs happens through social collaborations. These social collaborations, anchored in multiple networking strategies, relate to closed networks and collaboration with competitors. The major path for pooling resources for informal entrepreneurs to benefit their ventures is through networks (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003) and social resourcing (Sarasvathy et al., 2008), enabling them to access instrumental resources, such as social capital, and to access scarce resources (Gedajlovic et al., 2013). The resources gathered undergo recombination and are used to pursue opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Different collaborations allow informal entrepreneurs to access and share resources in a reciprocal manner. The acquisition of resources is crucial for creating products and services to ensure competitiveness.
7.3.1 Source: Personal Resources

Some scholars (e.g., da Rocha, Cotta de Mello, Pacheco, & de Abreu Farias, 2012; Sarasvathy, 2001) consider entrepreneurs usually start the entrepreneurial process based on the resources that they have at hand and in their control, rather than from the industry or via market analysis. Personal resources capture behaviors related to conservative financial philosophies, bootstrapping (Bhide, 2010), seeking good deals, careful spending, minimal expenses, etc. (Powell & Baker, 2011, p. 7).

Personal resources in the sample were observed in terms of the pooling of financial resources. From Table 28 it can be observed that major finances in the startup phase were arranged by the informal entrepreneurs themselves. Other examples of personal resources were careful spending; for example, Umaira, before exiting Party Place, focused on personal efforts as a principle to manage her business finances. She believed in working hard and that those around her should work just as hard. She was happy to create new products and explore business opportunities with a few contacts – as a primary source of her business survival. Shahid from Eventox managed his electricity through solar panels. He mentioned that his office electricity bill was mostly zero because he was using solar energy for his office space. Mehvish enlisted help from her maids and home helpers to prepare gift bags and goodie bags for events to save time and extra labor costs.

A few other examples of personal resources are illustrated in Tables 26 and 27, which show how different event planners tried to manage their business finances using their personal resources as a major source of gathering resources in the startup phase. Informal entrepreneurs did jobs in parallel, and some extended on their previous businesses and invested their savings in event planning. Some informal entrepreneurs continued to work freelance in their early years of business operation. For example, Rabia provided consultancy on event arrangement and interior decoration. Rabia was also a speech therapist and
utilized this experience where possible. Bilal from Concept worked for a news agency for a long time until his business was running properly. Asma from Potter’s Wheel taught graphic design in different universities. Munaj worked for his father’s business as well as running his own. Bilal from Royale worked in a logistics company. Larosh from OEM worked for the Ministry of Information. Some extended their previous businesses, for example, Flower King was a flower shop before becoming an event planning business. OEM was initiated in the parent firm, Overseas International, a publishing company. ADS started through savings from the previous guest house business.

Table 26 Examples of Personal Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Personal Financial Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADS Event Planners</td>
<td>Savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Jobs in parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutshell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter’s wheel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Royale Weddings Planner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Party Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasions</td>
<td>Expanded from previous business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Event Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Craft Managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower King</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miradore</td>
<td>Freelance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bia Interiors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 27 Quotes Depicting Personal Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Resources</th>
<th>We started majorly with the help of our investments from our previous business. (ADS Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I developed my business on my own. I am also doing two temporary jobs at universities in parallel to support my business over the long term. (Asma from Potter’s Wheel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We extended our event business from our flower shop business. (Rao from Flower King)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.2 Source: Bonding Social Capital

Bonding social capital is a closed network that may include family, friends, and employers. Closed networks refer to bonds of affection, obligation, and responsibility, and raise expectations of gift-giving and in-kind assistance. Closed networks are essential in providing mutual support, the exchange of resources, and facilitating cooperation among groups. In this thesis, closed networks refer mainly to family and friends, i.e., members related by blood or marriage, and other relatives. A good closed network relation could be further expanded to an unrelated person with whom one has a friendly relationship. Family and friendship relationships are extremely important for informal entrepreneurs’ initial access to resources in this thesis.

MacDonald and Coffield (1991) found that young middle-class entrepreneurs in their study often benefited from parental financial support. They also found much evidence of in-kind support (e.g., providing free bed and board to children while they were setting up their businesses). In contrast, Aldrich and Kim’s (2007) study, drawing on a considerably larger data-set, found there was little evidence of direct investment by parents in their entrepreneurial children’s businesses, although they supported the idea that parents could provide useful in-kind support. In this study, family provision of tangible resources was generally in terms of both in-kind support and financial support. Informal entrepreneurs were likely to raise initial investments/resources through friends and family.

The participants found support for their business from many sources, including family, friends, colleagues, peers, and employers. They described several kinds of business support, such as emotional, practical, financial, informational, and motivational. For example, Tables 28 and 29 illustrate that family and friends were a source of information about possible resource-gathering activity. Participants who received practical help with their businesses and with household activities (especially female entrepreneurs) described this social support as reducing pressure and facilitating the achievement of business
goals. Several participants also expressed the value of having a discussion partner for the exchange of ideas and encouragement.

Table 28 Examples of Support from Closed Networks from the Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support from Closed Networks</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th>Employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADS Event Planners</strong></td>
<td>Moral support</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td>Moral support</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eventox</strong></td>
<td>Idea generation</td>
<td>Office space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flower King</strong></td>
<td>Moral support</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td>PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miradore</strong></td>
<td>Idea generation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutshell</strong></td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occasions</strong></td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overseas Event Management</strong></td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potter's Wheel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rabia Raheel</strong></td>
<td>Moral support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revelations</strong></td>
<td>Office space</td>
<td>Projects, Facebook pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Royale Event Planners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Studio Events</strong></td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Craft Managers</strong></td>
<td>Meetings with clients</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Party Place</strong></td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 29 Quotes Exemplifying Resource Gathering from Family/Friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>It is my family that supported me in everything, morally, and financially sometimes. I had to be out of the home all night to arrange events and organize everything, this is not possible without family support. (Munaj from Nutshell)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One cannot do anything without family. When I started my firm, I asked my father for 50 thousand rupees. Other than that, my father and my wife are my constant moral support. (Rizwan from Occasions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ibrahim started OEM under the Overseas International name and national tax number (NTN), which is owned by his mother. (Larosh from OEM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>If the business is legitimate and socially viable, friends and family would help, for us our friends’ trust and belief in our abilities became the multiplying factor. They provided us with opportunities to work, and we executed it well, this is how we started gradually. (Larosh from OEM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My friends are a great help in marketing my events, they spread the word and will invite their friends and relatives to sell tickets and to get the crowd and participants at exhibitions and events. (Kanwal from The Craft Manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>I worked voluntarily in an NGO for some time. When I planned my own business, I asked my manager if I could utilize their office space for dealing with clients. He agreed and this is how I started Eventox with minimum resources. (Shahid from Eventox)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have worked with the Islamabad Women’s Chamber, which is a vocational training institute for women at government level and also arranges events. They are really helpful and motivating their president legitimated us by being the chief guest at our very first exhibition, and she and her daughter always generously provide us with guidance and business-related advice. (Kanwal from The Craft Manager)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the participants described support from closed networks as substantial for resource gathering activity, e.g., Bilal from Concept, but a few also described closed network constraints, i.e., non-supportive relationships with family, and pressures become stronger for females, both married and single. Other pressures from closed networks included being insensitive to the participant's profession and experiencing demands such as different career options.

The participants’ attitudes toward support from closed networks were likely to influence what kind of support they received. Some participants, e.g., Flower King and Rabia from Bia Interiors, gave accounts such as “you do not want to bother others.” Some expressed the value of wanting to position themselves as “strong and able” and believed in their own efforts, e.g., Hira from Revelations. However, support from closed networks was evident in one way or another in all cases in the startup phase.

7.3.3 Source: Bridging Social Capital

Bridging social capital focuses on social capital bounded in external ties (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Scholars argue that bridging social capital serves as a channel of valuable information, new opportunities, and resource provision (Granovetter, 1973; Larson, 1992; Uzzi, 1997). Event management mainly relies on collaboration with competitors. Such collaborations consist of different collaboration strategies, such as contracting, panels, volunteering, and third-party agreements (mostly with competitors) among informal entrepreneurs, as demonstrated in Tables 30 and 31 through examples and quotes. The collaboration with competitors observed in this thesis among informal entrepreneurs were complementary for all informal entrepreneurs, unlike the competitive rivalry suggested by Adler and Kwon (2002).

The findings indicated that collaborations with competitors are important for informal entrepreneurs. A competitor’s collaborative network observed in this thesis was located close enough to be called upon immediately in case of an emergency as suggested by Sutter et al. (2013). For example, Munaj from Nutshell discussed the instance when he faced a protest and his event execution was not managed. He relied on his competitor network to get things done, even in his absence. Strong competitor networks ensured a smooth flow of resources and information among informal entrepreneurs in the sample. Informal event planners are located mostly in E-11 Islamabad and this proximate grouping of competitors has resulted in increased quality and competition in event production (The Nation, 2015). The event planning competitor network arrangement has resulted in an organized structure of event entrepreneurs. Increasing numbers of event planning entrepreneurs are moving to this location because of the benefits of collaboration, e.g., an increased customer base, smooth resource transfer, skilled manpower, event information, etc. (The Nation, 2015).
These competitor collaborations make it possible to arrange resources, keep the client base with micro-entrepreneurs, and change the competitive forces in favor of informal entrepreneurs instead of the hoteling industry with slack resources. Under such arrangements, entrepreneurs with sufficient resources make the investments and provide the resources required for event planning and execution, and then receive part of the profit made from the event execution by the front party. The labor involved in all types of collaboration is predominantly informal waged labor and there are no formal contracts. Informal labor works on verbal contracts and on a daily basis. All the collaborations in this study were based on the principle of trust, the exchange of resources, and shared understanding of working together. Examples of cases are provided in Tables 30 and 31. From these tables it is very clear that those cases identifying business development as their main goal and assessing resource needs accordingly show the most collaborations.

Contracts concern long-term collaboration among different institutions (for example, contracts with universities, hotels, government organizations). These contracts help to attain event offers, human resources, and creative ideas and skills from students, venues, etc. Such collaborations are formal, as all contracts are written in advance. However, contracting does not bind event planners to these institutions only—they can work anywhere and everywhere—but event planners should prioritize their contracts in the case of events.

Third-party collaborations with competitors are collaborations in which event management businesses gather resources without owning the resources themselves. These are usually verbal arrangements, and, in this study, no formal contracts were observed in any case. Every transaction is based on mutual trust and the principle of mutual benefit. In third-party collaborations, the event planner providing resources will not be at the front end. The name will be that of the event planner designing and executing the event service. In this way, resources are arranged by new entrants with limited costs and both parties share an agreed amount of money. This arrangement is especially useful in the offseason, when there are few events locally, for example in the Islamic months of Ramadan or Muharram.

Panels are collaborations that enable vendors and labor workers to work for any competitor event planner in the market but being a panelist will obligate them to prioritize the event planning firms to which they are committed. Panels allow the sharing of resources and different vendors among all the competitors in the event industry. For example, graphic designers, florists, raw material suppliers, etc., may work for any event planner. They are registered on panels for different event planners. Clearly, this arrangement is much less favorable than borrowing resources through third-party arrangements. In this case, although resources can be arranged easily within limited costs, the availability of suppliers or the required labor might not be ensured each time, as they are listed on the panels of different event planners.
Table 30 Resource Gathering through Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Third-Party/Competitor Collaborations</th>
<th>Panels</th>
<th>Contracts</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royale</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miradore</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower King</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutshell</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter's Wheel</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Manager</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventox</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Events</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bia Interiors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 31 Quotes and Examples Illustrating Resource Gathering through Collaborations

| Third-party competitor collaborations (mostly with competitors) | • For the first four years, Royale dealt through third-party agreements and only used its name. The third party arranged all the resources, and Royale launched and utilized these resources creatively in an event. This involvement of the third party lowered the profit margin, so Royale decided to build its own resource base to increase its final profits.  
| • “Such collaborations are important to avoid the creation of a monopoly in the market. I even refer clients to other event planners when I am full on event booking sometimes” (Munaj from Nutshell). In such collaborations there are proper terms and conditions. For example, if Nutshell is at the front end, its competitors cannot publicize or advertise the event as their own. It should be in the name of Nutshell.  
| • Concept engages in both types of networking. It used third-party agreements for itself, and now provides third-party collaborations to other event planners in the market which are new, do not own their resources and have no investments for building their resource base.  
| • Revelations provides resources and staff to its new competitors that have no inventory. Revelations employs a strategy of good networking and collaborations with competitors in the market. Hira personally follows all of them and will willingly give advice to those who ask her: “We are not afraid of competition, we like it. This for us is the motivation to bring new ideas and concepts to the market.” |
Quotes & Examples Illustrating Resource Gathering through Collaborations (continued)

Contracting

• A major part of human resources for OEM International comes through collaborations with universities: “We currently have a team of 13 marketing executives. They are either fresh graduates from NUST, Iqra, or they are students still studying, all of them from the business and marketing field, so our strategy is that we train them initially by taking them with us on our event venues and ask them to observe certain things afterward based on their interests and sophistication. We divide them into different teams and distribute tasks accordingly. Some teams work for the wedding section, some for corporate, some for the production section, and some for commercial setups, so this is how we arrange our team. They get the training and certificates, and we get the valuable human resources, and yeah if they are good, they join us as part of our permanent team as some of them are senior executives, so it’s like a cycle” (Larosh). Other than this, OEM also has temporary ushers who are again students, and they can be hired on a project-to-project basis depending upon the needs of the project.

• Occasions has a good reputation among its competitors in the local market. Competition for Occasions is just another reason for maintaining quality. Moreover, Occasions has established good relations with its competitors to manage the resource base: “We do not see our competitors as our ‘enemies’; rather, we are very well connected with our competitors. We provide them with resources that they need and we get the resources from them for our events.” One good example of this resourceful strategy is the collaboration between Occasions and Monal.
Quotes and Examples Illustrating Resource Gathering through Collaborations (continued)

| Panels | Flower King arranges its resources by having different vendors on its panel. These vendors could even be other event planners. Thus, the strategy is that these event planners on the panel of Flower King can also work with anyone else. They are not constrained by Flower King from working with other clients or other event planners.  
Potter’s Wheel is on the panels of different event planners, both providing services to them and for some events taking on the whole package, but primarily do so informally. |
| --- | --- |
| Volunteers | To establish its human resources, Potter’s Wheel has internees who work on a non-paid basis and receive certificates for internships in return. There are also other temporary contracts for daily wage labor to reduce the cost of human resources.  
Nutshell has a strategy to include students in its team. They can work as long as they want, but they do not get paid; instead, they get some share of the profit based on their hours of work or their contributions to event management projects. “Students are great in bringing new ideas and creative concepts. We add fresh students to our projects regularly. They get recommendation letters and experience certificates from us as internees, or those who are attached for the long run get some share of the profit and we get a workforce and fresh ideas from them.” |
7.3.4 **Source: Linking Social Capital**

Linking social capital reflects the term “linkage” in Woolcock’s (2001) framework, comprising a relationship of a community or group with groups of a higher social order (Halpren, 2005; Woolcock, 2001). Linking social capital is the result of the weakest relationship but the most valuable outcome, as linking provides access and connections to power structures and institutions (Hawkings & Maurer, 2010). In this study a few cases showed the presence of linking social capital, as shown in Table 32 and exemplified in Table 33. These show that OEM has strong powerful contacts locally, e.g., with government officials and bureaucrats to obtain No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for its events. In a country like Pakistan, recruiting international artists and obtaining NOCs are not easy tasks because of security concerns. However, OEM manages this gracefully. OEM also has links to embassies, which help in getting visas for international guests and artists. Rabia launched her business in Dubai quite successfully because of powerful, yet the weakest ties. She had a link with the Dubai Institute of Interior Design, where she took a course. The institute introduced her to Pakistani-based clients with similar needs that Rabia could serve as an event planner. Munaj had an army background and has strong links with army officials. He used these links wherever required. For example, he mentioned that when there were political strikes and blocked routes in the city, he would use his links with the army and overcome these obstacles to manage his events on time. Rao from Flower King had strong links with his colleagues from the aviation force. He was a captain himself and so had powerful contacts who could help him in getting event offers from elite clients, and this type of linking capital helped Rao to build his social legitimacy in the earlier years of his event business. Moreover, even after 16+ years of operations, this network provides Rao’s loyal clients. Flower King also developed linking social capital by building good links with government officials locally and generating public relations through social media. These were the two major sources for gaining new information on trends, demand, and competition in the market.

In the absence of linking social capital, informal entrepreneurs felt that they had no solution for fighting back against constraints. For example, Miradore had an unsuccessful event in Karachi because the local monopoly of event planners there did not allow it to execute its event and Miradore had no powerful network in Karachi at that particular time. Later, Miradore started working on building linking social capital in Karachi, establishing links with local authorities and thus eventually managing to execute its events.
Table 32 Examples of Linking Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Embassy Forces Local (Army, Administration Naval)</th>
<th>Memberships Institute Vice-Chancellor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miradore</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutshell</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter’s Wheel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bia</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interiors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 33 Quotes and Examples Exemplifying Linking Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Embassy</th>
<th>“The government does not support any such international commercial events. When such events are arranged, it is the total responsibility of the event management company to arrange everything from event planning and execution, to the artists' and audience’s security and safety. We have good links with embassies to get visas for our international artists.” Ibrahim from OEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forces (Naval, Army)</td>
<td>“I was a former captain in the naval force. I had good contacts with naval and armed forces officers. Flower King’s initial orders were offered from this network.” Rao from Flower King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Administration</td>
<td>On the corporate side, corruption is a challenge. Sometimes people in power can exert pressure and make threats to get free tickets for concerts or other public events. Therefore, it is crucial to have linking social capital at times. For example, Tipu stated that “Delayed payments in corporate events is a challenge because our labor and vendors will not wait for delayed payments, and this can affect our reputation, service, quality, network, hmmm, pretty much everything, it’s that risky.” Tipu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Corporate events, 80% of the work is offered based on PR. Usually, in the corporate sector, “events are offered because of a request for quotations (RFQ), but if we have excellent PR, we even get the event before RFQ.” Bilal added, “having said that, it does not mean that anyone would compromise on quality, quality comes first, and then PR is another rule of thumb.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute Vice Chancellor</td>
<td>Rabia established good links with the Dubai Institute of Design while doing a diploma with this institute. “This institute helped to introduce me to new projects and Pakistani clients, and now I am planning to launch my business in Dubai.” Rabia from Bia Interiors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>“I made links with professional organizations to seek information, e.g., the Women’s Chamber of Commerce, to gain more information on home-based artisans and the problems they face in accessing market opportunities. I am also a member of the Rotary Club and have designed a series of events for poor kids who are deprived of education. These events include fund relief, seminars, and focus groups in the interior areas of Punjab.” Kanwal from The Craft Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3.5 **Activity: Trust**

Trust refers to the belief and confidence in other agents to behave as expected, despite uncertainties, risks, and the possibility for them to act opportunistically (Lyon, 2000, p. 664). The trust inherent in social collaborations allows informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry to work together, and thus, through resource gathering, they are considered important market players in the creative industry (Ibexmag.com, 2012; *The Nation*, 2015). Informal event planners group together in E-11 Islamabad, and this purposeful networking strengthens trust and power structures in the event industry (*The Nation*, 2015). Event planners have strong competitor collaborations that allow them to negotiate and relocate the market in their favor. This is in line with Seo and Creed (2002) and Sutter et al. (2013), who argued that strong networks change existing power structures.

Event planners employ informal labor, students, fresh graduates, and young, skilled entrepreneurs. There are no formal agreements or contracts for waged labor or voluntary staff. They operate on a verbal basis and the shared understanding that operations will be executed with dedication.

In Table 34, trust is the main factor that binds ties, whether in a closed network or competitor collaboration. This interaction with human capital leads to the creation of strong competitor networks within which members are strongly tied. Such networks result in the creative production of events in the locale. Among the informal entrepreneurs, the sharing of resources was represented as an act of mutual aid. It formed a pattern of reciprocity for informal entrepreneurs in the event industry enabling the continuous gathering of resources. There must be some degree of trust among informal entrepreneurs to enter into different competitor collaborations and allow for the cyclical mobilization of resources. The content exchanged could be objective (information, goods, material, services) or subjective (trust, recognition, norms) (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). When new entrepreneurs enter the event planning industry, they prefer to network with prestigious event planners, as such networks can serve as a buffer against several resource constraints. Strong competitor networks also provide information about the market, potential threats, event design, opportunities, etc.
Table 34 Quotes and Examples Illustrating Trust as a Feature of Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rao was a former captain in the naval force. He had good contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with naval and armed forces officers. His initial orders for Flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King were offered by his personal network. Even after 16+ years of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operations, this network provides Rao’s loyal clients. This personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>network has grown and so has Flower King.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miradore has a strategy to maintain strong relations with its vendors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laborers, and clients (both private and corporate):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Event planning is not a one-man show. We need a pool of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and skills, so our strategy is that we pay our vendors and labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as soon as we finish the event, even if we incur a loss, we pay them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through our own pockets and in return we get a loyal team that is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always willing to provide a quality service.” Adeel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranging manpower at the last minute is not an easy task.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Considerable labor is required to arrange floor setups, transport,</td>
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<td>stage setups, seating, etc. For this, a huge labor force is present</td>
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<td>in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, so Flower King has good relations with</td>
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<tr>
<td>the labor force, who are always willing to deliver a quality service</td>
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<td>even if asked to be available at the eleventh hour.</td>
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7.3.5 Reflection and Concluding Remarks on Aggregate Dimension 2: Resource Gathering through Personal Resources and Social Collaborations

Resource gathering in this thesis has been discussed in terms of personal resources and social collaborations. Personal resources depend entirely upon resource availability. If informal entrepreneurs have certain resources available to them, they will invest these in their businesses. Johannisson (2011) considered the entrepreneurial process to be a creative one of putting existing resources into a certain entrepreneurial context. However, if personal resources are insufficient, informal entrepreneurs will look for social collaborations. In this thesis, most of the resources were provided with the help of social collaborations.

Social collaborations refer to somewhat different levels of connectedness among groups in the form of closed networks and competitor collaborations, i.e., bonding and bridging social capital in social capital theory. Consequently, they concern relationships of trust (and distrust) among networks, which allow (or do not) for the reciprocal exchange and temporary sharing of resources. Trust can be built depending on the extent to which actors within a network share time,
emotional intensity, mutual confidence, and services (Granovetter, 1973). Trust can be characterized by relationships in which network members exchange advice and help (Marsden & Campbell, 1984). Overall, the process of resource gathering is a dynamic and ongoing activity. Bridging social capital can be converted to bonding social capital, and in certain scenarios resource gathering through competitor collaborations can be project based. In project-based competitor collaborations, bridging social capital can end with the project rather than continuing and developing further.

Overall, the findings of this study support the existing literature, namely that bonding and bridging social capital are important for businesses in gathering resources. Bonding social capital provides financial resources and information, as well as supporting morale (Granovetter, 1973; Larson, 1992; Uzzi, 1997). Bridging social capital is central in providing raw material, human resources, new information (e.g., about new locations), and new customer needs that can help in the creation of new opportunities, as suggested in the prior literature (Bhagavatula et al., 2010; Granovetter, 1973). Social collaborations serve as channels of valuable information and resource provision (Granovetter, 1973; Larson, 1992; Uzzi, 1997). Entrepreneurs in event planning often use their closed networks and competitor collaborations, i.e., bonding and bridging social capital respectively, to obtain information about events, clients, culture, human resources, raw materials, etc. The informal entrepreneurs shared instances in which they received advice, mentoring, resources (raw materials, consultations), etc., free of cost, solely on the basis of trust and understanding among their closed networks (i.e., bonding social capital). In contrast, when informal entrepreneurs chose to employ competitor networks (bridging social capital), they did so to find new opportunities and ensure an efficient flow of resources (Granovetter, 1973).

In the absence of strong competitor collaborations or bridging social capital, the cases showed that informal entrepreneurs felt they had no solution for fighting back against resource constraints. For example, Party Place and Eventox relied on closed networks (bonding social capital) but did not succeed in growing their competitor collaborations (bridging social capital). Potter’s Wheel and Studio Events had the same problem. Thus, either the entrepreneurs left the event planning business or were ready to give up. Thus, informal entrepreneurs with few competitor collaborations experience slow growth in business because of a lack of sufficient collaboration.

Sometimes information saturation was also observed, as the informal entrepreneurs noted that people in the business provide the same event designs, and thus there is no creativity event architecture and management. Similarly, Granovetter (1973) suggested that too much concentration in the network results in information saturation and the chances of creativity are reduced. For example, Shahid (Eventox) pointed out that everyone is doing the same kind of things, and nothing new is mentioned. Similar views were expressed by Tipu (Miradore), Hammad (Royale), and Rao (Flower King). In this situation, informal
entrepreneurs try to look for new kinds of network that can provide new locations and new markets. For example, ADS found new attractive locations in northern areas of Pakistan because of its competitor collaborations in the northern city of Pakistan, Kashmir. Rabia launched her business in Dubai quite successfully because of bridging social capital. She had a link with the Dubai Institute of Interior Design, where she took a course. The institute introduced her to Pakistani-based clients who had needs that Rabia could serve as an event planner. This is in line with Burt’s (1992) argument that predominantly disconnected partners are beneficial because homogeneous networks can be information saturated; however, a similar position in A heterogeneous network can bring advantages. Sutter et al. (2013) showed that the geographic dispersion of the network helps entrepreneurs move their entire business to new locations to escape the “threats” from local gangs, thus enhancing the entrepreneur’s awareness and understanding of opportunities in other markets.

7.4 Aggregate Dimension 3: Readiness to Utilize Local Resources

The literature shows that resource valuation is subjective, as is resource utilization, and therefore what entrepreneurs do with the resources sought is essential. For example, Mosakowski (1998) showed that the tendency to participate in the entrepreneurial process will affect an entrepreneur’s decision process in utilizing resources. Powell and Baker (2011) empirically showed that creativity in sourcing, production, and promotion enable entrepreneurs to utilize limited resources to produce a desirable outcome in nascent and young firms. One mechanism that is identified as most important in resource utilization among informal entrepreneurs in this thesis is entrepreneurial readiness (Lau et al., 2012; Schillo, Persaud & Jin, 2016).

Entrepreneurial readiness is a relational condition (Bygballe et al., 2016) in which informal entrepreneurs are related to social networks and local stakeholders (labor, community, peers, etc.) allowing the informal entrepreneurs to deal with upcoming resource needs. Informal entrepreneurs’ social networks and social connectedness improve their confidence and ability to judge the availability and utilization of resources to exploit certain opportunities (Westlund & Bolton, 2003). Entrepreneurial readiness promotes the willingness of entrepreneurs (Lau et al. 2012) and the resource perceptions of entrepreneurs (Schillo et al., 2012) to direct entrepreneurial behaviors with a view to adapting a product or service for use in a specific locale or market. In this study, the informal entrepreneurs were creative and alert in utilizing local knowledge, local culture, local labor, and local networks for their entrepreneurial activities.

The prior literature identifies the importance of entrepreneurship training for entrepreneurs to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Choo & Wong, 2006;
Olugbola, 2017; Pihie & Sanni, 2009). Furthermore, in relation to resources, the existing literature shows that those entrepreneurs who do not participate in entrepreneurship training put too many resources at the front when they engage in business activities (Bygrave & Timmons, 1992). On the other hand, when entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship training, they are influenced by new ideas to utilize resources and put scarce resources at the front (Olugbola, 2017).

In this study, the informal entrepreneurs did not have formal training, but they perceived that they had sufficient business training through their informal venturing activities. Informal venturing in this study was observed as a means of obtaining knowledge about the local market, clients, resources, services, etc. Informal entrepreneurs opted for informal venturing to test their ideas, and to develop social networks and the resource base over time. During this informal venturing, the informal entrepreneurs gained valuable local information, social capital resources, cultural resources, and human capital resources. Informal venturing improves the relational conditions of informal entrepreneurs locally, contributing to their readiness to utilize resources effectively. Entrepreneurial readiness in this study is an ongoing and emerging phenomenon that allows informal entrepreneurs to become more alert and predictable in utilizing resources according to their readiness.

### 7.4.1 Local Information Upcycling

Utilizing local information resource is an important strategy for marginalized groups in developing countries (Williams, 2010, 2015). Across the cases, informal entrepreneurs expressed that they deliberately tried to re-use existing information resources, as they had unique qualities, such as heritage, a story, a history, or a special spirit attached to them. This reuse of information resources can be considered information upcycling. Upcycling is a way of reusing and repurposing things that are otherwise considered waste, and the upcycling of resources is common in developing countries (Baillie & Foster, 2014). The reuse of information is possible by being alert to new information and this upcycling of
information appears important for various reasons. One reason is that it is relatively cheap, and thus informal entrepreneurs engage in the reuse of local information; sometimes, the entrepreneurs even expressed pride in making their products with information that was locally reused in an unusual manner and this did not cost very much at all. One example is the owner Nutshell, who introduced old-fashioned wireless communication technology from his army background for events held in the local community. Nutshell exploited the fact that none of the big providers wanted to invest in and create wireless communication in the area:

“My background is in the army. I know that using wireless in everyday routine work can make things better organized and more professional in our events. And this is one of the very qualities that is allowing us to work well.” Munaj from Nutshell

Current research recognizes that social media are open, informal, and diverse networks, which extend entrepreneurs’ information search and interactions to engage socially with information. Social media information comes through finding and connecting with other information users (e.g., Facebook), following other information users (e.g., Twitter), sharing with other information users (e.g., Instagram, YouTube), and reflecting on experiences (e.g., Blogger). The Web and social media now provide newer forms of interactions and tools that complement and enhance informal entrepreneurs’ information search behaviors.

All the cases in the study knew the event planning industry was growing in Pakistan. Increasing numbers of event planners are joining the industry and this was viewed as a pleasant change among the participants. They welcomed it and one gesture in welcoming new event planners was to provide used resources to newcomers, who could reuse and repurpose the resources to suit their needs and demands. For example, Flower King had a practice of giving their used flowers and décor from events to newcomers:

“In some events we even put around 1,000 flowers in stage decorations. We have centerpieces, and when winding up events we do not need them so we give these either to flower sellers in the market, who resell them at lower prices, or to hospitals, or in most cases to the new event planners who need to learn décor, and above all they cannot spend too much on expensive flower décor.” Flower King

Another practice employed by Miradore was that they let new event planners attend and observe their events and even take pictures of the décor and how things work:

“We are not afraid of anyone, rather we let people learn things. There is no academy in Pakistan, no institute that can teach such things, so people come and see and take pics of our events. That’s okay, we have a belief whatever is ours will come to us and
this practice gives us reason to improvise and be creative for our next projects.”

Miradore

In this way, Miradore has repurposed its event venues as a major knowledge resource for new entrants at no cost.

Hira has a mission to make event planning accessible and affordable for the young generation. So, she can arrange an event for just a few thousand rupees. She will use infused water instead of carbonated drinks or mineral water bottles; she will use traditional candy makers instead of imported chocolates and candies on birthdays. Her mother and Hira herself arrange the desserts from their home by baking themselves. Hira extends events to green public venues instead of approaching expensive hotels:

“I believe that creating a personal feel and customization is most important in events. I want to make things memorable not memories, and this can be done even with a small amount of money.” Revelations

The analysis shows that entrepreneurs often re-use existing and often immobile resources to suit a new purpose. This practice transforms old and undeveloped resources into new materials with improved quality or higher value.

Revelations

The ability to visualize culture often provides the identity of the venture. Cultural commodification is an overlap of tradition and modernity in any society (O’Neill, 2005). Across the cases, it was found that informal entrepreneurs can commoditize cultural resources of their context. The commodification of culture manifests itself as informal entrepreneurs take advantage of the typical features of local modernity and a historical feel at the same time. For example, in the case of Revelations, Hira stated:

“Revelations is a connection and true representation of nostalgia and modernity for Islamabad youth. We do things that truly belong to the youth here, this will keep our identity alive.”

Islamabad is a modern city, and its youth is known as burgers in Pakistani slang language. However, Hira from Revelations argues that Islamabadans are not burgers but represent true culture of their city. Hira, being born and raised in Islamabad, completely owns the city culture. She introduced events like celebrating birthdays at 12 am on your doorstep, etc., which are most popular in twin cities.
Resource Mobilization across Cases Findings and Analysis

“Our products and services are popular because they are not googled, but they belong to us, these are the things that we do, simple yet exciting.” Hira from Revelations

In the case of Flower King, the founder restored farmhouses using traditional materials, such as the traditional arrangement of swing called jhoola and flower arrangements, and used the scenic beauty and peace connected with farmhouse venues as a story to connect with customers. Exploiting the heritage of Lok Virsa, Craft Manager used the building to exhibit arts and crafts, and employed the stories and history connected with the traditional and local arts and crafts to create experiences for the customers. These are important tactics on the part of Kanwal in commoditizing a sense of culture since the Lok Virsa Museum, the Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage Shakarparian Park in Islamabad, and the National Art Gallery and National Arts School in Rawalpindi are the most prestigious cultural landmarks of Pakistan. Traditional local crafts are made by gatherings of housewives and are usually produced by hand or on looms in households. Mehvish from Studio Events also uses these traditional crafts and art in her gift boxes and wrapping services, and tries to commoditize the historical and traditional feel of culture for her clients.

7.4.3 Utilizing Local Social Capital Resources

Social capital involvement was frequent in the event planning businesses studied. Social capital provided informal entrepreneurs with resources such as knowledge, raw materials, advice, legitimacy, and social viability, etc. with regard to ventures. In return, the event businesses provided with a strong commitment to social causes, employment generation, competitiveness, improved products, and services. This finding is consistent with Powell and Baker (2011), who found that groups and society can be used as a forum of shared interest to promote ventures and gain market share. Informal entrepreneurs also relied on experts, intermediaries, closed networks, and collaborations, or took less charge themselves to avoid uncertainties (Heinström, 2010). The analysis showed that informal entrepreneurs often engage with local social capital and utilize this social capital in their entrepreneurial activities. Informal entrepreneurs create activities and value through the involvement and participation of social capital.

Overall, competitor collaborations are among the resource mobilization strategies that are nurtured because of high tolerance of ambiguity (Bhatti, 2013; Birtchnell, 2011; Kumar, 2011), and allow for survival and progress even with a low resource base (Birtchnell, 2011). However, at some points, too much

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4 The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) was established in 1974 with the mandate for research, collection, documentation, communication, preservation, and promotion of the tangible and intangible heritage of the country. www.Lokvirsa.org.pk
conformism in the closed networks and competitor’s collaborations can also create challenges for entrepreneurs, as primarily observed in the case of women entrepreneurs, who have to fulfill the standards of society to prove themselves good women and successful entrepreneurs at the same time.

7.4.3.1 Utilizing Closed Networks

In this study, parents provided moral support, social legitimacy, and encouragement to their children/family members to develop their career ambitions in the event industry, although in a few cases participants recalled negative advice and discouragement from parents, i.e., that they should not become entrepreneurs, but rather adopt a proper career (e.g., Nutshell, Concept, Miradore). However, this distrust in entrepreneurial ventures from family members was only at the start, and later with the coming success, parents changed their viewpoints and looked on the entrepreneurial career positively.

Aldrich and Kim (2007) have suggested that children can gain particular benefits from their parents when they follow particular professional occupations, not simply when they are entrepreneurs. It was clear that parents with relevant business or professional experience were found to act as significant sources of business and technical advice during the startup and early development of the business. In a minority of cases this extended to the provision of business services (e.g., marketing of events, event design, arranging event supplies, etc.) to the informal entrepreneurs’ businesses.

7.4.3.2 Utilizing Collaborations

Informal entrepreneurs in this sample preferred to source locally as much as possible. As they saw it, they could support the local economy while creating entirely local products, services, or experiences for customers, who increasingly perceive and demand “local” sourcing as better and more appropriate than other options. Entrepreneurs frequently integrate local products, businesses, or services in their own venture, for example, using other businesses in the area as suppliers, or supplementing a product line with other products from the area. For example, a venture might use local wooden furniture carved by local artists and serve locally produced food for events. This not only provides the customer with an entirely local experience, but also contributes to a sustainable local economy:

Entrepreneurs tend to use local employees, labor, producers, and suppliers to develop their ventures, thus also being supportive of the community and ensuring market sustainability.
7.4.4 Utilizing Local Human Capital Resources

The differences in human capital resource utilization chime with Misra and Kumar’s (2000) argument that even if information is available to all, not all entrepreneurs can make sense of and analyze it. The entrepreneurs commonly used the productive skills and technical knowledge embodied in the community’s labor force, deliberately and whenever possible. They hired local builders, electricians, and cleaning firms, expressing an intrinsic need to contribute to the well-being of the local economy. Entrepreneurs freely acknowledged that the labor force in their communities might not be the best educated or the most knowledgeable concerning their business, but that they made up for it with passion and loyalty. Local labor was highly valued as locals are extremely loyal, devoted, and passionate. The general attitude among the entrepreneurs was that everybody can be trained, even when it comes to technologically advanced tasks. Overall, the data strongly indicate that the lack of a highly educated workforce does not pose an insurmountable challenge for entrepreneurial efforts to establish ventures. The hiring and training of local employees can contribute to creating local expertise and jobs, which potentially gives the venture a good reputation within the community.

7.4.5 Activity: Informal Venturing

Informal venturing was not just a matter of financial constraints in the sample, but rather a choice to start informally. This informal venturing helped in gaining necessary knowledge about the market and sector-relevant experience to run the event planning businesses. Therefore, it is important to consider informal venturing as a source for gaining human capital. This type of human capital has not been considered in previous human capital studies, or in other areas of entrepreneurship research. Participants clearly accorded importance to these experiences and talked about them as a strategy for accumulating necessary knowledge stock and social capital for their ventures. Fourteen out of the fifteen participants took part in informal ventures. Informal ventures provide a fuller understanding of the development of human capital among the participants, as the knowledge and skills gained through informal venturing appeared to be more significant to the actors themselves than school and certificates. For most participants, their pre-startup human capital development could not adequately be understood without an appreciation of their informal venturing experience, especially participants with the most limited work experience. The existing human capital literature has considered how entrepreneurs’ accumulation of conventional entrepreneurial and work experience as an adult may contribute to the performance of future ventures they set up (Gimeno et al., 1997; Ucbasaran et al., 2006; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003). Informal venturing played a greater role for informal entrepreneurs starting a business without work experience. Informal ventures enabled the entrepreneurs to demonstrate the ability to identify, gather,
and utilize business-relevant resources, a key aspect of generic and entrepreneurship-specific human capital. Key skills developed through informal venturing varied but included selling, marketing, communication skills, and sometimes negotiation, business planning, and purchasing. For the 15 participants who set up their first main venture in the same sector as their informal ventures, they also gained some venture-specific human capital (i.e., “an entrepreneur’s knowledge of the venture domain relating to customers, suppliers, products and services” (Ucbasaran et al, 2006, p. 29). For example, the participants recalled developing an understanding of the event industry through their informal venturing.

7.4.6 Reflection and Concluding Remarks on Aggregate Dimension 3: Readiness to Utilize Local Resources

Informal entrepreneurs in the study engaged in a resource mobilization process. During this engagement, informal entrepreneurs became alert to recognizing resource needs and meeting these resource needs. Thus, the condition emerging in this situation was alertness to information sources. It was also observed that informal entrepreneurs needed to meet resource needs through their collaborations with different stakeholders. These social networks and collaborations require the responsibility to act with common understanding of stakeholders’ needs to gain social legitimacy. Thus, the next condition emerging was trust to maintain and accumulate social resources. These conditions are exceptionally relational and led to openness and flexibility on the part of informal entrepreneurs for the reciprocal exchange of resources. Improved relational conditions also improved informal entrepreneurs’ readiness, i.e., alertness, predictability, and skills, to utilize resources effectively. Nevertheless, the resource mobilization process differed, and several resource mobilization efforts were not successful. Similar patterns were found in cases in which informal entrepreneurs were keen on expanding strong social collaborations and information search. However, informal entrepreneurs who focused solely on recognizing resource needs and were alert to information search without expanding social collaborations were not successful in the resource mobilization process.

Therefore, it is argued that the relational conditions that emerged over time during the resource mobilization process contributed to entrepreneurial readiness. This entrepreneurial readiness is emergent and augments the ability to use different resources and their effectiveness.

The prior literature shows that entrepreneurial readiness is higher among those who have entrepreneurship education and training (Keating et al., 2011). Likewise, Schott and Cheraghi (2014) revealed that entrepreneurship training is essential in enhancing entrepreneurial competencies among young students. Correspondingly, in this thesis, the findings showed that informal venturing
supported the experience of business activities right from inception to creation, and in ongoing business activities. Informal venturing prompted entrepreneurial readiness among the informal entrepreneurs by providing them with an outlook on real business. The informal entrepreneurs gathered relevant and appropriate skills and resources before they registered their businesses. Having ideas about managing limited resources, social collaborations, etc., aided the continuity of business activity. For example, it was observed that in a few cases informal firms were formalized by registering legally over time. Therefore, informal venturing is a form of human capital, providing business training and the necessary business skills.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

7.5.1 Human Capital and Resource Mobilization

This study concerns resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs, through startup and the early years of building a business. Informal entrepreneurs can adapt to acquire the human capital (knowledge and skills) required for their businesses through generic, and entrepreneurship- and venture-specific human capital. Authors such as Davidsson and Honig (2003) and Hambrick (2007) see a positive relationship between knowledge, information, and education and successful economic and entrepreneurial activities. Human capital theorizes the ways in which resourceful entrepreneurs systematically develop personal knowledge of the potential uses of resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010; Lévi-Strauss, 1966). Along the same lines, it is shown in this thesis that human capital, especially information search activities and informal venturing, play an important role in successful resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. In this thesis, information search (entrepreneurship-specific human capital) and informal venturing (venture-specific human capital) were different types of human capital providing different types of stock of knowledge and skills to informal entrepreneurs.

Information search is a process in which an individual goes about looking for information. The information search activity observed in the cases showed that informal entrepreneurs dealt with uncertain situations and actively strove to attain clarity through their local knowledge, experience, and information seeking, as suggested by the existing literature (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010; Lévi-Strauss, 1966). Making sense of information contributes to resource identification and resource utilization (Misra & Kumar, 2000), and is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs access resources (Baker et al., 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (e.g., Salunke et al., 2011), or shape social meanings in contextual settings (e.g., Mair & Marti, 2009).
In the information search process, informal entrepreneurs may address which of the several resources fit best and with what effect. Information search can be time-consuming and point to resource scarcity, but at the same time, it can increase general and specific knowledge and experience (as in the case of informal venturing) and can lead to new options and the potential for resource mobilization in constrained situations. In contrast, the empirical data show that some participants found it difficult to compromise between resource mobilization and business goals. They often tried to modify their work and looked for other means to mediate their resource scarcity. For example, Haroon Adeem from The Jungle responded:

“I have been in the field of event planning for more than 30 years and I even started my business, but I cannot be a person running after resources and compromising quality over quantity, so I quit and preferred to stay in the field as an event manager, not an entrepreneur.”

Another interesting and different observation was that of accidental search, in which there could be an encounter with some information channel without any anticipation or intention of information seeking or resource need. In the case of Revelations, particularly, Hira shared many incidents when she came up with new themes and events because of accidental discovery. For example, forever 26 and on your doorstep at 12 am, were among the events that were personally experienced and shared by Hira and her friends, and just by discussing with her friends one day, new ideas popped up in Hira’s mind. This is more consistent with Kirzner’s (1999) view on entrepreneurial discovery. However, again this entrepreneurial idea coming to Hira’s mind was the result of her background knowledge and experience in relevant activities, which allowed her to reinterpret and repurpose the situations in a different way, in line with Fiet et al.'s (2013) view that information and prior experience make entrepreneurs more alert to the understanding of new opportunities.

This study provides evidence of the human capital the informal entrepreneurs obtained from their formal education. Some studies (Davidsson & Honig, 2003) have found correlations between having more years in education, or a higher qualification achieved, and being more likely to set up a business. Kourilsky and Walstad’s (2007) research suggested that while high school students perceived having a higher level of education as being an important investment for becoming an entrepreneur, actual business owners did not. The evidence from this study shows that no participants viewed any of their educational experiences as having inspired them to consider an entrepreneurial career, but some informal entrepreneurs recognized that school had taught them the necessary knowledge and skills. This study has demonstrated that having a basic level of education was believed to be important by participants in starting their businesses, but that school was not seen as providing an entrepreneurial context for developing the relevant skills or inspiration for starting a business.
This study suggests that participants who did not go to university were able to recall specific skills and knowledge development that they had gained through starting their entrepreneurial careers earlier, i.e., informal venturing, rather than going to university (i.e., experiential learning “on the job”). There is limited evidence for specific analysis of the role of entrepreneurship education, as only two participants studied it (Eventox, Revelations), both as small parts of broader business studies degrees. This makes it difficult to assess what kinds of entrepreneurship education might be most useful. It is interesting, however, that two other participants who attended student entrepreneurship societies were both positive about the role they could play in developing young entrepreneurs (OEM, Nutshell), and this may be a useful focus for further research. Such societies encourage the practical learning of entrepreneurial skills, which the participants found more useful in their entrepreneurial careers compared to the didactic education often received in the formal context. This appreciation for practical entrepreneurial learning in these societies also partially supports Gibb’s (2002) assertion that entrepreneurship should be taught through practical exercises, such as drama, simulations, projects, and games, rather than only being delivered through didactic methods.

Human capital studies have examined both the impact of general work experience, and management work experience in particular, on the subsequent performance of a person setting up an own business. Human capital studies have looked at general work experience in terms of the number of years in full-time employment or number of jobs held (Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Gimeno et al., 1997). Gimeno et al. (1997) found that having two to four jobs led entrepreneurs to perform better than having more or fewer jobs.

Only two participants had direct business relevant experience, while eight had experience of working in industry, and the remaining five participants had informal working experience at the graduate level. Most of the experience was helpful in customer service skills, marketing, working with the Internet, social media, bookkeeping, etc.

Most participants in this study did not gain sector relevant work experience for their first event planning main ventures through working for other people. It is worth noting that all participants gained event planning business experience through informal venturing, thus gaining venture-specific human capital this way. Compared to the existing human capital literature, managerial human capital was very uncommon among the informal entrepreneurs in this study, with only one having business management experience (Ucbasaran et al., 2006). Ucbasaran et al. (2006) point out that it may be the quality of management experience that is most important, rather than simply the time spent in such managerial roles (e.g., the hierarchical position at which managerial experience is gained in an organization).
7.5.2 Social Capital and Resource Mobilization

Entrepreneurial social capital concerns the exchange and sharing of resources, others’ knowledge, skills, processes, and financial capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Davidsson & Honig, 2003). The trust inherent in informal entrepreneurial social capital allows the extraction of value from social capital (Lyon, 2000; Pretty & Ward, 2001; Uphoff, 2000). Bridging social capital, i.e., external ties and networking through competitor collaborations, such as third-party collaborations and contracts with universities, panels, and waged labor, allowed informal entrepreneurs to arrange financial, human, and physical capital with success. These collaborations and contracts are more prominent in the cases in which resource needs are recognized as business development. In this group of informal entrepreneurs with business development resource needs, the growth of the venture was the ultimate motive. However, for some informal entrepreneurs with resource needs, controlling the resource deficit was more of a focus than arranging resources. It was observed that this group was looking for short-term and temporary solutions to meet the resource gap. Mostly this group relied on personal resources and bonding social capital, i.e., through strong ties, for example, family, friends, short-term contracts, temporary labor, personal savings, etc. The first category, i.e., those focused on business development (resource needs) became involved in a variety of competitor collaborations, extending from bonding capital (personal networks) to wider bridging capital (social collaborations), i.e., they extended their resource-gathering strategies from personal resources to bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. In contrast, the group controlling the resource deficit (resource needs) drew mainly on personal resources, bonding social capital, and temporary project-based collaborations. The third group, with social goals, relied mainly on bonding social capital and a few attempts at bridging social capital were observed in this case. For example, Rabia from Bia interiors and Mehwish from Studio Events both relied on their family for financial capital, physical space, and networks.

In all three types of social capital, trust, the exchange of resources, and networks provided informal entrepreneurs with financial resources, new information resources, and human resources, as discussed by Granovetter (1973) and Burt (2000). Social capital may also help in reducing the costs related to information search for resources (Dubini & Aldrich, 1991).

The participants’ networking started from the recognition of resource needs and information about social contacts. At the individual level the entrepreneurs relied on personal efforts, while at the group level they gained support from family, friends, employers, etc. (bonding social capital), and through external ties (bridging social capital), while at the societal level they mobilized resources through creating, extending, and strengthening their relations locally. The entrepreneurs frequently used bonding and bridging social capital to meet financial, capability, and capacity constraints. The mobilization of social capital by the informal entrepreneurs supported relations with local networks and
stakeholders. These relational conditions with internal and external stakeholders (bonding, bridging, and linking social capital) concern the entrepreneurial mindset, namely in identifying, gaining, and mobilizing resources that would otherwise not be available to them. Scholars refer to this relational condition in supporting entrepreneurial alertness, predictability, and skills to utilize local resources as readiness (Bygballe, 2016). This entrepreneurial readiness, i.e., relational condition in the resource mobilization process, produces positive synergy, and influences the process of resource mobilization and how informal entrepreneurs thrive, and develop their entrepreneurial ideas and ventures.

Wiltbank et al. (2006) suggest that entrepreneurs in unpredictable markets should instead seek to co-create the future (re-construct the environment), not through prediction, but through involving self-selected stakeholders, and by doing this, they can take control over and co-create the immediate future (Wiltbank et al., 2006). Informal entrepreneurs in the study co-created the business environment in the true sense by collaborating and by effectively utilizing bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. However, unlike Wiltbank et al. (2006), the informal entrepreneurs frequently predicted and skillfully utilized scarce resources during the resource mobilization process. In the prior literature, bridging social capital can be a source of competitive rivalry (Adler & Kwon, 2002); nevertheless, in this thesis, competitor collaborations did not produce competitive rivalry, but complemented the operations of informal entrepreneurs by providing missing resources. Competitor collaborations were common practice for informal entrepreneurs in this thesis to reduce costs, identify relevant resources efficiently, and maintain business with informal event planners. The mobilization of resources through third parties, panels, students, and local waged labor was among the strategies that helped the informal entrepreneurs to develop their businesses.
Discussion and Conclusion

This discussion chapter centers on the findings, contributions, and the existing literature regarding how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources through social and human capital. The first part of the chapter discusses resource mobilization as employed by the informal entrepreneurs. Part 1 presents the collaborative resource mobilization model and the phases involved in the resource mobilization process among informal entrepreneurs. The phases comprising the resource mobilization process centers on resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization. The triggers and facilitators, i.e., sources and activity, respectively, of these phases are also discussed. For example, resource constraints, collaborations, and the alertness and predictability of entrepreneurs are important triggers or sources, while information search, trust, and informal venturing are important facilitators that are listed as activities in the collaborative resource mobilization model. Part II discusses the theoretical contributions and research implications. This chapter extends the discussion of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs to collaborative resource mobilization for its promising role in the development and formalization of informal ventures. The chapter ends with Part III, which makes final remarks, draws policy implications, and provides concluding remarks.

8.1 Brief Summary of Previous Chapters

This research has aimed to understand resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry in Pakistan. The objective of the study was to understand how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources.

Resource mobilization through social and human capital is a theoretical concept that is appropriate to the study of entrepreneurs in informal businesses in emerging economies, mainly because in these industries, competitive advantage is derived from the business networks and the knowledge entrepreneurs have. In the existing entrepreneurship literature, social capital and human capital are concepts that have helped to extend understanding of how businesses are created and managed. However, most understanding of social and human capital and entrepreneurship come from the Western perspective, and this understanding can be extended to newer cultural and industrial settings (Bhagavatula et al., 2010), such as Pakistan, and to the event planning industry in particular. The main categories underlying the social capital perspective are bonding and bridging social capital. Central to these perspectives is the question of what constitutes an effective social capital pattern, and this is still a matter of debate (Bhagavatula et al., 2010).

The prior literature suggests that having a network alone may not ensure success. Entrepreneurs need to put it to use, utilizing their knowledge and skills, i.e., human capital. Everyone receives information, but only a few mobilize
resources and even fewer do so successfully (Feldman, 2000). This selective gathering and utilization of resources is due to varying human capital levels among entrepreneurs. According to Shane (2000), people possess different stocks of knowledge and such knowledge stocks are crucial in translating potential resources into actual resources (Feldman & Worline, 2011). The knowledge an individual has is termed human capital. Consequently, this research focuses on how resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is influenced by an entrepreneur’s social capital and human capital.

To arrive at answers, I adopted a qualitative analysis, employing a comparative case-based methodology. The qualitative data were mostly in the form of interviews. The rationale for this is two-fold. First, data collected from the interviews helped to develop the qualitative database in NVivo, and second, the interviews provided additional insights for the in-depth analysis of the research issues. This chapter links the findings of the study to academic debates in the resource mobilization and social and human capital literature. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on the entrepreneurship literature relevant to this study. The second explores the possibilities of how the study of informal entrepreneurs’ resource mobilization can add value to the existing literature, i.e., theoretical contributions. Dealing with informal economic activities is the current prominent policy issue among cultural and economic policymakers in Pakistan. The implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are discussed in the last section of the chapter, Part III.

Part I

8.2 From Resource Mobilization to Collaborative Resource Mobilization among Informal Entrepreneurs

The entrepreneurship literature discusses the importance of resource mobilization as a concept that facilitates understanding of economic activities, especially in the presence of resource constraints. In adverse and uncertain conditions, entrepreneurs often create opportunities from resources that are readily available and/or of seemingly limited economic value (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Resource mobilization describes a process of arranging and deploying resources. Previous studies employing resource mobilization relate it to activities such as resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization. However, in the existing literature on resource mobilization as a main theoretical concept, there are two research gaps. The first research gap is that most of the
discussion on resource mobilization in entrepreneurship concerns formally
regulated and legal businesses or industries, and as a result there is very little
understanding of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. The
second research gap concerns the understanding of the resource mobilization
concept itself, namely that most discussion of resource mobilization involves
resource gathering. However, resource mobilization is a broader concept that
involves activities other than resource gathering only. In this thesis, extending
the results of previous studies and taking resource mobilization as a main
theoretical concept, I suggest using the resource mobilization concept to describe
different ongoing activities, i.e., resource identification, resource gathering, and
resource utilization. Therefore, in this thesis, I focus on the resource mobilization
process among informal entrepreneurs, i.e., how informal entrepreneurs mobilize
resources in the presence of several resource constraints.

Informal entrepreneurial ventures may offer resources unique to their
settings. Overall, informal ventures typically suffer from resource scarcity,
inadequate infrastructure, small markets, and the limited presence of human and
financial capital compared to formal entrepreneurial ventures (Webb et al., 2009,
2010, 2013, 2014). Informal entrepreneurs are therefore more likely to rely on
tactics such as maneuvering structural contexts and make the most of the locally
available resources, such as natural amenities, socio-material, and cultural
resources (Welter & Xheneti, 2013; Welter et al., 2017). Also, considering the
infrastructural challenges, informal entrepreneurs are likely to be particularly
attentive to how their entrepreneurial activities can leverage and build
connections to other localities. In other words, informal entrepreneurial activities
tend to be highly affected by resource constraints, context, and industry
conditions (Siqueira, Webb, & Bruton, 2014). Thus, it is significant to understand
how informal entrepreneurs can mobilize resources to create viable ventures in
underprivileged situations (Webb et al., 2009, 2010).

The findings of this thesis show that entrepreneurial mobilization of the
resources among informal entrepreneurs is the result of resource constraints that
serve as a main driving force. Resource mobilization results in unique resources
and problem-solving capabilities for informal entrepreneurs. This work is largely
consistent with existing scholarship on resource mobilization in constrained
situations. For example, Misra and Kumar (2000), Powell and Baker (2013), and
Bradley et al. (2011) claim that a constrained environment may be an important
trigger for the mobilization of unique resources and problem-solving skills (Baker

The prior literature suggests that not only resource constraints, but also social
capital and human capital, influence the informal entrepreneur’s resource
mobilization process. The findings from this thesis also confirm that the interplay
between social capital and human capital provides informal entrepreneurs with a
position to be able to gain access to different resources, such as raw materials,
networks, labor, knowledge, information, etc. Therefore, resource mobilization
in this thesis is a function of resource identification, resource gathering, and
Discussion and Conclusion

resource utilization that is influenced by informal entrepreneurs’ human capital and social capital. This act of mobilizing resources describes how informal entrepreneurs cope with constrained contexts and act resourcefully. In contrast to prior work, however, I detail entrepreneurial resource mobilization as a collaborative process. Thus, based on these findings, I propose a concept of collaborative resource mobilization that is defined as an ongoing and continuous process of the collaboration with competitors and stakeholders to mobilize resources. This collaborative resource mobilization means that it is complementary and does not generate competitive rivalry among informal entrepreneurs.

In comparison to the resource mobilization concept developed and explained in the existing literature as competitive resource mobilization, I propose the existence of collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Resource mobilization in the prior literature classifies different activities, but largely enforces the significance of resource gathering and does not discuss resource mobilization as an ongoing activity. Moreover, the existing concept of resource mobilization implies competitive resource mobilization. However, in contrast, collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is a process comprising ongoing and overlapping activities of resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization. Second, collaborative resource mobilization highlights collaborations among competitors and stakeholders to complement the operations of other informal entrepreneurs and gain resources under conditions of constraint. This approach of collaborative resource mobilization benefits all informal entrepreneurs with limited resources, and this resource availability and market openness enforces market competition.

Informal entrepreneurs can balance some constrained aspects by being creative through collaborative resource mobilization. In this study, different resources were mobilized for arrangements in working with informal entrepreneurs. This behavior was observed in most of the cases, in which informal entrepreneurs were trying to piece together different local components of traditions, networks, trust, structures, and norms to address everyday challenges. Some of the sample firms evolved from informal to formal status by dynamically drawing upon collaborative resource mobilization according to their situation and need. All the firms showed some level of collaborative resource mobilization activities, with different intensity and effects, as reflected in their entrepreneurial ventures. These collaborative resource mobilization activities sanctioned these informal firms with discursive legitimacy, resources, and power dynamics within certain limits (Baker & Nelson, 2005). However, not all firms were successful; some continued to remain informal and constantly struggled to control resource scarcity to make further progress. An attempt at exit from the business was also observed during data collection because of limited resource arrangements.

Engagement in collaborative resource mobilization involving social capital and human capital helps informal entrepreneurs make room in the concentrated market by competitively maneuvering when they are constrained to compete
because of structural and environment limitations (Baker et al., 2013; Corbett & Katz, 2013). Mostly these dynamics are explained in terms of showing how these resource-constrained informal entrepreneurs successfully compete against stable, mature competitors (the hoteling and catering industry in particular). It was found that the rapidly increasing informal sector in Pakistan is largely faced with disadvantages in relation to resources and tough competition from the market. This motivates informal entrepreneurs to engage in resource mobilization behaviors and enact resource limitations. Deploying human capital and social capital strategies, informal entrepreneurs make recourse to resource mobilization activities as everyday actions (Williams, 2009; Williams & Nadin, 2013). These firms in the sample, except OEM, started as informal in response to different resource constraints.

Studying the case findings, the role of social capital, i.e., networking and collaboration, was very prominent in resource gathering. In many situations in the studied cases, the role of prominent individuals from society and even government officials were seen as a mobilizer of the services of these firms, i.e., linking social capital. This informal market is expanding widely because of the interactions between culture and authority (different prominent groups, government). This societal context influences the form and functioning of these firms, thus directing them toward semi-formal and formal legal status, turning these entrepreneurial firms into functional and increasingly competitive operations.

Drawing on entrepreneurial human capital (information stock, informal venturing) and social capital (networks, trust) (Davidsson & Honig, 2003), the informal entrepreneurs in the sample learned to adapt (Baker et al., 2013; Powell & Baker, 2011) to circumstances, and the pressures and constraints of daily life. In drawing on the existing formal and informal structural arrangements, informal entrepreneurs are neither completely modern nor traditional in their structures (Meagher, 2013). The resource mobilization and organizing principles of informal entrepreneurs are based on their informational and relational conditions with society, networks, and culture, and this manifestation in culture and traditions is the standard practice in enhancing their readiness (Bygballe et al., 2016), making them more vigorous, even if they are operating outside the bureaucratic modes. Readiness bestows them with the skills to identify and utilize resources (Lau et al., 2012), and the social legitimacy that helps in gaining resources and limited power (Freytag & Thurik, 2007). Therefore, readiness acts as a synergy for coping with constrained situations (Olugbola, 2017) and looking for cheap alternatives arises as their primary arrangement (Smallbone & Welter, 2006). These temporary and controlled replacements reflect the behaviors of resource mobilization by dynamically combining and adapting different information, social, human, and cultural resources, while maintaining the appearance of informal authority (Baker et al., 2013).

This interplay of social and human capital influences resource mobilization, helping informal entrepreneurs to switch between informality and formality, and
reflecting the blurred boundaries of institutional laws and regulations existing in Pakistan. This state of collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs has led to inclusion and social organization by challenging the bureaucratic approach and has also affected and shaken the traditional hoteling industry because of their competitiveness (Adeem, 2014, interview). Previously, these hotels with a strong resource base were the source of monopoly in the market, covering all catering, decorating, and event-related business (Adeem, 2014 and Sheryar, 2014, interviews). Thus, with the ideology of resource mobilization through networks, the whole attitude of the hoteling and catering industry has been geared toward incorporating new trends, innovation, and creativity. This informal entrepreneurial resource mobilization activity has channeled a new wave of entrepreneurial autonomy (Misra & Kumar, 2000) and has involved even the government sector as clients. This is one positive side to all this informal economic activity. However, on the other hand, these power dynamics are temporary, since these firms have no hold on formal law and order until the firms are legally registered and formalized. There is as such no formal law that addresses these informal firms, and this is one major challenge that could hamper their autonomy and power. Thus, informal entrepreneurial activity in this study was mainly facilitated through collaborative resource mobilization and was influential and functional. Nonetheless, there are many challenges for these informal entrepreneurs because of the presence of institutional contradictions that can only be handled through formal laws and regulations. Although there are semi-formal and formal firms that sub-contract with government agencies for certain functions, in the complete picture they are operating in shadowy ways, between and beyond laws at the same time (Meagher, 2013).

These collaborative resource mobilization activities vary according to the social position of informal entrepreneurs in a wider societal context. For example, males were in a better position to search for resources and to negotiate structural arrangements compared to female entrepreneurs in the study, who responded that they faced the issues of mistrust and low confidence when it came to negotiations for resources. Similarly, education, communication, prior experience, family support, and informal venturing were other influential factors determining entrepreneurial practices. These resource arrangement practices worked with and resisted formal or bureaucratic arrangements at the same time.

Overall, the findings substantiate the claim that understanding the mobilization of resources among informal entrepreneurs may contribute to the conversation regarding resource mobilization. This thesis has opened up new ideas for future research, especially on collaborative resource mobilization as an alternative to competitive resource mobilization among resource-constrained entrepreneurs.
8.3 Collaborative Resource Mobilization among Informal Entrepreneurs: An Overview of the Model

The following model (Figure 6) illustrates how informal entrepreneurs mobilizes resources. Figure 6 demonstrates the activities that promote collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Collaborative resource mobilization is based on the principle that all collaborations should be mutually beneficial for the competitor entrepreneurs in the event industry in Pakistan. The model consists of three main phases of resource mobilization. The first phase of resource identification is triggered by the recognition of resource needs. The second phase of resource gathering is influenced by personal resources and collaborations. The third phase comprises resource utilization, which is influenced by the readiness of informal entrepreneurs. These phases are ongoing and overlapping, which means they can occur several times and in parallel for different ongoing events and projects in the informal ventures. These three phases or stages of the model correspond to the three aggregate dimensions in the data structure presented in Figure 5 in Chapter 7. The first phase corresponds to Aggregate Dimension 1, the second activity corresponds to Aggregate Dimension 2, and phase 3 corresponds to Aggregate Dimension 3 in the data structure.
Discussion and Conclusion

8.3.1 Resource Identification

The first stage of model or phase of resource mobilization refers to the first aggregate dimension of the data structure in Figure 5, i.e., the recognition of resource needs. This explains how resources can be identified. The findings of this thesis suggest that resource identification is triggered by the recognition of resource needs. The existing literature shows that knowledge, experience, and social networks determine the priorities for searching for resources among entrepreneurs (Brush et al., 2001).

Depending on the resource constraints and informal entrepreneurs’ information about the market, resources, etc., they start resource identification activities. The informal entrepreneurs evaluated resource constraints against their
business goals. This evaluation established the criteria for seeking relevant information concerning the required resources. Resource constraints can be categorized as financial, capability, and capacity constraints (Dolmans et al., 2014). For example, the informal entrepreneurs with the business goal of controlling resource scarcity looked for temporary solutions to meet the financial, capability, or capacity resource gap. On the other hand, the informal entrepreneurs with business development as their business goal looked for permanent or long-term solutions. This resource constraint valuation helps in identifying relevant information for the resources required to fill resource constraints, and this information about constraints and resources together result in the recognition of resource needs for informal entrepreneurs in business startup and activity. Resource need recognition sets a certain target to find resources that match informal entrepreneurs’ perceived requirements for resources. Resource identification was crucial in determining whether informal entrepreneurs would be able to continue with the development of their ventures.

The recognition of resource needs was ongoing and dynamic and was influenced by the informal entrepreneurs' changing business and resource situations. The individuals' recognition of resource needs was important for their abilities and the possibilities of resource gathering as a next step. Informal entrepreneurs could mobilize different resources, including financial, social, and informational (Bradley et al., 2011). The participants used their information as main tools to search for and mobilize resources. For example, a well-informed entrepreneur could modify various networking strategies to suit different situations. Moreover, information search and knowledge of informal entrepreneurs essentially supported this resource identification among informal entrepreneurs by providing diverse solutions within limited means (Fiet, 2007). Along the lines of Brush et al. (2001), this thesis confirms that informal entrepreneur information is the one of the main elements that influences resource identification. However, all this information collected about resources and the market corresponds to the resource constraints estimated by informal entrepreneurs. Thus, the recognition of resource needs depends on informal entrepreneurs’ resource constraints, and their knowledge and information about the market, resources, and business situation.

8.3.2 Resource Gathering

The second activity concerning resources in the model is accessing and sharing resources and corresponds to the main activity of resource gathering. This stage refers to Aggregate Dimension 2 in the data structure (Figure 5). The resource gathering activity starts with personal resources at hand, and then extends to internal and external collaborations, i.e., bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. Informal entrepreneurs mainly gathered resources through three social capital paths. One was through bonding social capital, namely informal personal ties such as family members and friends. The second was through business
networking, bridging capital. The third was linking capital, which was weakest but the most powerful, such as with government officials. Here, bonding social capital (i.e., family and friends) and bridging social capital (collaborations with competitors, stakeholders) played important roles in resource gathering among informal entrepreneurs. Linking capital was also observed in a few cases but was not as common as bonding or bridging social capital. Informal entrepreneurs had different strategies for forming social contacts and collaborations to gather and access resources. The most prominent was collaborations with competitor entrepreneurs, i.e., other event planners. These competitor collaborations can take the form of panels, volunteers, informal wage labor, and third-party collaborations. Informal entrepreneurs have strong ties to their competitors’ networks. These ties work based on mutual trust and the reciprocal exchange of resources through collaborations, prominently with competitors. Trust strengthens and accumulates social capital, and social capital accumulation improves the chances of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs, as shown by different researchers (Aldrich & Reese, 1993; Elfring & Hulsink, 2003). Social capital paths provide financial, cultural, moral, and physical resources, and in some cases powerful contacts with extra authority and out of the way favors. All these resources are important, but the goodwill and social legitimacy provided through social capital are especially crucial for venture development. Another resource observed concerned information. Since event designing and execution happens in a competitor collaborative network, similar information is accessed by informal entrepreneurs, and consequently ideas are easily copied.

8.3.3 Resource Utilization

This phase corresponds to Aggregate Dimension 3 in the data structure in Chapter 7 (Figure 5). Informal entrepreneurs utilize local resources, and therefore enhanced readiness facilitates effective local resource utilization to promote informal entrepreneurship. Informal entrepreneurs develop strong relations with networks, stakeholders, and local peers. This relational condition, i.e., readiness, acts as a synergistic mechanism that provides entrepreneurs with the alertness and skills to utilize resources, and the confidence to predict resources and how they can be utilized differently. The readiness to utilize local resources helped informal entrepreneurs to make their services more attractive and appealing by adding local cultural and traditional aspects to their products and services. The informal entrepreneurs utilized local food products, local furniture, local flowers, local information, and historical knowledge to connect to the local community and easily access resources. For example, the informal entrepreneurs used farmhouses, traditional crafts (e.g., local embroidery), traditional art (e.g., truck art) to arrange for venues, access sponsors, and obtain cheap materials. Local wage labor is mostly uneducated, but the informal entrepreneurs employed local wage labor because it was cheap and most frequently available. The participants
pointed out that there is a huge risk in informal labor due to the lack of education, but they relied heavily on waged labor as they were the most skilled in creating the floor setups, flower decorations, etc. Informal venturing is the most common way of gaining local knowledge, thus improving the relational condition of informal entrepreneurs, and helping them gain event-planning skills through trial and error. Informal venturing allows entrepreneurs to gain local knowledge and skills, enabling them to become alert and predictable in building collaborations, gaining social legitimacy, and developing a clientele base and testing the market.

In this study, venture-specific human capital, i.e., informal venturing, has been explained as accessing informal entrepreneurs’ human capital. In contrast, the existing literature has not been very specific concerning exactly which combinations of human capital accomplish resource mobilization. This study has established how venture-specific human capital is helpful in resource mobilization for informal entrepreneurs. Venture-specific human capital, i.e., informal venturing, provided a major source of local knowledge regarding the market, and relevant resources for starting and especially for building a business. Having informal venturing experience gave participants in this study the necessary local knowledge and skills to identify local relevant resources required to start and run their informal business, and ultimately contributed to enhanced entrepreneurial readiness among the informal entrepreneurs. The enhanced readiness of the informal entrepreneurs provided knowledge of the local market in which they utilized the resources required for their ventures, both in starting and managing the business.

These activities together promoted collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. To summarize, this section provides an overview of the model of collaborative resource mobilization.

8.4 Impacts of Resource Mobilization on Informal Entrepreneurial Ventures

8.4.1 Resources Mobilized

Informal entrepreneurs can access resources, both tangible and intangible. In this study, informal entrepreneurs collectively obtained the following resources in order of relative importance: 1) physical resources, 2) human resources and human capital, 3) social and community resources/capital, 4) immaterial resources, and 5) financial resources.

8.4.1.1 Local Physical Resources

Physical resources include the basic objective sets of tangible assets, such as unused buildings, offices, equipment, the landscape and nature, and venues
related to business services (Barney, 1991). These are utilized by informal entrepreneurs in both regions (Islamabad and Rawalpindi). Examples of physical resources in the study are empty, neglected buildings, such as former havelis and local farmhouses. Such unused buildings often offer associated legends, history, and heritage, which enhance their (potential) value. Especially in Islamabad, the participants referred to the beauty of the landscape and the entire geographical location as a valuable physical resource; it provides a sense of peace and quietness due to its natural beauty, mountains, and valleys. The founders of Nutshell and Flower King purposely chose farmhouses for their events to give a glimpse of the traditional local atmosphere.

Those offering food services, such as Concepts, Occasions, and Royale, relied on locally grown fruits and vegetables. Dyed yarn, local furniture, flowers, centerpieces, vases, drapes, balloons, local traditional candies, lighting, carpets, and so on, are some of the examples of local physical resources required by each event planning business. Most participants also indicated the physical scale of operations from their different head offices in different cities throughout the country. For ERD Solutions, Bia Interiors, Miradore, and Occasions, these locations were extended to international cities. In contrast, some participants, such as ADS events, Royale Event Planners, and Flower King, had one main head office and they believed that if the projects were well executed, one office would be enough. They owned large trucks and containers to transport their inventory and items from one city to another if they had to operate outside twin cities.

8.4.1.2 Local Human Resources

Human resources include employees, workers, volunteers, and the collective human capital or stock of productive skills and technical knowledge embodied in a community’s labor force (Arthur & Sheffrin, 2003). All the 16 businesses examined here had employees who were exclusively recruited locally. These businesses tapped into non-traditional labor sources, including volunteers, pensioners, the chronic unemployed, local artisans, craftsmen, students, and home-based workers:

“Volunteers get an agreed amount of 5% of the total income when the event goes into profit. When the event earns no profit, they will not earn anything.” Craft Manager

“We have internees who work on non-paid contracts and get certificates for internships in return. Other temporary contracts for daily wage labor also exist to reduce human resource costs.” Potter’s Wheel

Revelations had temporary contracts with university students or with O level and A level students. They needed pocket money and were very hardworking. They would message the Revelations team to indicate when they were free in a given month, and accordingly these temporary employees were contacted when
required. Some students also had internships at Revelations. Interns are not paid by Revelations but receive an experience certificate and serve for three to four months. Those who are particularly motivated and want to be part of the Revelations team may be taken on permanently.

Arranging manpower at the last minute is not an easy task. Considerable labor is required for arranging floor setups, transport, stage setups, seating, etc. For this, a huge informal labor force is present in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, so Flower King has cultivated good relations with the labor force, ensuring willingness to deliver a quality service even if asked to be available at the eleventh hour.

Also, the informal entrepreneurs frequently utilized the service, expertise, and products of other local businesses to leverage collective regional human capital. They commonly integrated local products, businesses or services, using other businesses in the area as suppliers, or to supplement a product line with other products from the area. The informants emphasized that they deliberately recruited locally and sourced from local businesses.

8.4.1.3 Local Community Resources
The informal entrepreneurs utilized local professional and private partnerships with the community and other entrepreneurs in the area. Especially in informal entrepreneurial ventures, social capital is a critical community characteristic. Like other resources, social capital resources lie in the community and context within which an actor or entrepreneur is located (Adler & Kwon, 2002). By forming small informal support networks, informal entrepreneurs share labor and equipment, and employ different collaborations and contracts to sell products and/or services together. Across both cities, using social and business networks to help each other is a common strategy of making do and surviving constraints. For example, the founder of a concept event planning business explained that using his network allowed him to share or borrow workers from neighboring businesses. Such networks enable them to gain access to a wider market, extending beyond the small local market, and developing a common branding for products from a certain area and associating them with quality in the local event planning industry. Furthermore, the informal entrepreneurs frequently made use of the entire community as a resource in their ventures, with a culture of self-help, relying upon and helping oneself and others.

However, in the case of Revelations, Hira relied on her foreign informal network to spread her name and provide services in England, solely based on her social resource. Thus, social capital can go beyond the local community.

8.4.1.4 Local Cultural Resources
Korsgaard et al. (2015) developed the concept of commodification to identify the use of the physical scenery and material of a local place as a resource to elevate the entrepreneurial venture. Likewise, in the cases studied in this dissertation,
historic buildings, crafts, local art, images, folk music, traditional rituals, and dressing, were also frequently used. Event planners such as Concept, Flower King, and Craft Manager believed in colorful weddings and events. Kanwal, for example, created one event in which she combined traditional seating arrangements on the floor for a movie with the latest digital technologies to execute the movie. Kanwal stated:

“We always keep our traditions alive in each of our events. In one of our events, we put traditional round cushions (traditional cushions called Gao Takias) on the floor, with colorful traditional carpeting, and channeled the latest movies. It was received warmly by our audience. I think people feel nostalgic and want more and more of our old setups in this busy and fast life.” Craft Manager

Royale Event Planners, ADS Event Planners, and Occasions believe in celebrating events with tastes of the traditional Mughal cuisine of Pakistan:

“We use local farm products in our food and traditional authentic recipes to keep our clients connected to our roots.” ADS Events

However, the cultural resources observed in the cases did not only concern the physical or material use of local resources, but extended to the traditions, feelings, and emotions of the local community. In this way, the informal entrepreneurs trying to develop cultural resources, such as stories and narratives, to mobilize resources and gain legitimation for their enterprise (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). For example, Occasions took it to the next level by providing a live kitchen, cooking everything at their event venues. People attending the events could come and enjoy the food. Rizwan thought live kitchen gave the feel of the old setups in villages, in which families used to eat in the kitchen and talk, sharing and creating memories:

“We provide a live kitchen for our events. You know this is what we used to do in our traditional weddings. Our clients love it, this not only ensures hygiene, but makes our events a central meeting place where everyone comes to eat, talk, and create a space for communication.” Occasions

8.4.1.5 Financial Resources

Financial capital and resources are an important antecedent of new venture performance, and the lack of financial resources may result in business failure, especially for emerging businesses (Bradley et al., 2011; Chandler & Hanks, 1999). The informal entrepreneurs encountered in this research sought or used personal finances, or arranged finances through employers, family, or friends in the initial stages. Some examples are shown below. To manage Royale in the early years, most help was provided by the employer Ovex Technologies. Bilal and Hammad were both employed at Ovex, and they used to work night shifts. Faisal
Khan, who was their boss, knew that they were working on a side business in the daytime, so he gave them flexible hours for the night shift.

“My father supported me in starting this business he gave me all the finances to establish our office and now, after I got married, my wife supports me through thick and thin.” (Occasions)

Miradore was started with the support of the personal savings of Tipu, Adeel, and later Abdul Rehman. The three of them are partners in Miradore productions, and they did not seek any help from their family, friends, or through any loan or credit. For OEM, the parent company Overseas International provided an identity, National Tax Number (NTN), office space, finance, and encouragement to work and go with the OEM concept.

8.4.2 Overall Entrepreneurial Resource Mobilization Behaviors

Entrepreneurial resource mobilization is the capacity to cope positively with adverse conditions. Some ventures were trying to survive, while others were going beyond survival, and yet others were achieving progress and growth in their ventures. In a few cases, no resource mobilization from external sources was observed, and ultimately, they exited their businesses and took up different managerial positions. These variations are categorized into four types of resource mobilization behaviors in Table 35. Each of these types is briefly identified as active, reactive, passive, and lack of resource mobilization.
Table 35 Resource Mobilization across Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variations</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active resource mobilization (4)</strong></td>
<td>Maximum collaborations through bonding, bridging, and linking capital (3)</td>
<td>Royale Events, Flower King, Miradore, Concept, ADS Events, Occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active search (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reactive Resource Mobilization (3)</strong></td>
<td>Medium collaborations through bonding, bridging, and linking capital (2)</td>
<td>Craft Manager, Potter’s Wheel, Revelations, OEM, Nutshell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active search (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive resource mobilization (2)</strong></td>
<td>Minimum collaborations, mainly bonding capital, and a few bridging capital collaborations (2)</td>
<td>Eventox, Bia Interiors, Studio Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passive search (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absence/lack of resource mobilization (1)</strong></td>
<td>Lack of collaborations, few bonding capital examples found (1)</td>
<td>Party Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passive search (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4.2.1 Active Resource Mobilization: Maximum

This category included firms that were highly resourceful. All of the firms in this category started small and informally. However, over an average period of 5–6 years, they became big names and formally registered firms. These are examples of very committed entrepreneurs who left their other jobs and had plans to grow and develop their firms. Hammad left his job and started Royale, and he wanted to continue the event planning business and expand its operations throughout Pakistan in the future. Similar to the situation with Flower King, Occasions, ADS Events, Miradore, and Concept started to manage their resources through third-party collaborations and their informal network support. However, at the time of the study, the situation was reversed: They were engaged in third-party collaborations with their competitors and new entrants in the market. These firms were in a strong negotiating position with their vendors and stakeholders. Community involvement and working for community causes were also reflected to a greater extent in this group, for example, utilizing local resources and involving local youth were represented quite strongly in the findings.

In short, the entrepreneurs included in the active resource mobilization category are those with business development and long-term business goals at the forefront, and therefore adopted an active information search approach to respond to information signals, with broader networks. However, being
business-oriented does not mean that entrepreneurs should start collecting a huge resource base. Resources are accumulated over time and those resources that are not available to entrepreneurs can be accessed through collaborations, contracting, panels, community involvement, and third parties. For example, Tipu from Miradore stated:

“We do not intend to have lots of resources with us, but we want to be a big name. We want our business to expand operations throughout, and this can be done even without having a large storage unit full of furniture. We believe in risks and we have even had empty pockets three to four times because of our risk-taking, but we will continue to do that.” Tipu from Miradore

8.4.2.2 Reactive Resource Mobilization: Medium

The group with medium resource mobilization includes firms that have a business goal to control resource scarcity. The resource scarcity perspective means that they are trying to control their resources and are trying to use resource mobilization strategies to address the resource gaps. They are holding things together, earning a name and fame through their internal systematic approach to problems, but are not taking major risks. For example, OEM is a popular and trustworthy name when it comes to concerts and international artist management, yet OEM is not interested in building a large resource base or the expansion of its business. One of the partners was still doing a parallel job and intended to continue a parallel career. For Potter's Wheel and Craft Manager the situation was similar. Asma and Kanwal from Potter's Wheel and Craft Manager respectively were doing parallel jobs to fill in the resources. They wished to deal with resource constraints and were putting all their efforts and savings back into third businesses in the belief that their firms would eventually develop, and things will improve.

Revelations represents pride for youth in Islamabad, being very innovative and affordable. Through an internal systematic approach, Hira introduced various innovative events that were popular among youth. However, while Hira’s approach to business kept things going, she believed in creativity and innovation, and that it could be done perfectly even if one were operating on a small scale. She aspired to make her business grow, but once the institutional situation improves. For example, she wanted to compete on the basis of quality and to fight back against intellectual property rights. She noted that she had even contacted lawyers to see how nonprofessional practices, such as imitating and copying, should be avoided in Pakistan. Thus, for her, fighting back against constraints was important, along with the creative and innovative side of business. The Revelations founder accepted herself that her efforts at gaining customers and collaborating with stakeholders were minimal; she wanted to work for green solutions, and improved products and services.

Munaj from Nutshell believed strongly in building a strong, aware community that knows what event planning is in the first place and changing the local
mindset toward event planning. He wanted to introduce more professionalism to event planning and gain respect for event planners in Pakistan. He aimed to be a big name in the event planning industry, and to this end, he was involved in combinations of networking strategies. However, he had achieved medium resource mobilization because he wanted to transfer his business to his wife and to have a more respectable career in the future.

The main feature of reactive resource mobilization is that firms commodify local cultural resources and this was prominent in all cases in this category, for example in the case of Craft Manager, Revelations, Nutshell, and OEM. The typical local resources utilized are the culture of Islamabad, employed by Hira to attract youth, farmhouses to give the image of peacefulness, artisans, and local traditional crafts by Kanwal to recall the traditional local cultures of interior Pakistan, and unity and peace as a grand narrative promoted by OEM among locals who have been attacked by terrorists in the few past years, etc. The entrepreneurs in this category did not engage as much in collaborative activities compared to entrepreneurs engaged in active resourcefulness, but they showed more readiness to employ local resources by connecting locally with the community.

8.4.2.3 Passive Resource Mobilization: Minimum

One case, Eventox, was rated as passively involved in resource mobilization. Eventox was a case of an event planner who was ready to do something different or switch career if things did not work according to his wishes. His view was that the event planning industry was now full of competitors, and wealthy and big players in the market, so he had achieved what he could in all the years of operation. Thus, it would be better to switch to another job or look for other business options. Eventox continued because there were no other natural options to which to change, and he had not been able to sell his investments in the market. Eventox at one point in time was a good name, and the founder did not want to end with a failure, but rather to have an exit with a good name. The founder of Eventox tried for loans but was not successful. Thus, in this case, the resource mobilization behavior was passive because the founder had sought to endure, but his efforts at networking were negligible, and this had led to a situation in which the services and products offered were not creating enough demand or results:

"The economic and institutional environment is not suitable enough in Pakistan, and I will switch as soon as I have some plan B to back up my expenses." Eventox

Another example of passive resource mobilization was Bia Interiors. Rabia relied considerably on her husband’s network to market her services. Rabia had no intention of quitting, rather she wanted to continue and develop. She thought that all that mattered was that she was in the game, because this could allow her to be a winner someday. Studio Events was another example, with Mehvish
undertaking entrepreneurial activities based on her interest and not viewing it as the ultimate source of income for her. She wanted to continue but could not spend much time on her business. Bia Interiors and Studio Events seemingly shared features with hobby entrepreneurs in that they elected to have a good work-life balance and have few employees and did not express high growth ambitions.

8.4.2.4 Lack of Resource Mobilization (Switching Careers, Winding Up)

A lack of resource mobilization was observed in cases that had short-term business goals and were externally oriented in terms of information cues. One case (Party Place) was categorized as engaging in no resource mobilization behaviors. Umaira switched her career, not because she did not like event planning, but due to her approach of sorting constraints when she faced them. She switched to a banking job and wanted to sell her business inventory at the time of this study. She did not feel comfortable with unfamiliar people around, did not attempt collaborations with stakeholders, and did not make any special marketing efforts to gain customers. She provided event planning services to a very small community that knew her personally. Haroon Adeem had been in the event planning field for more than 35 years. He started his own business, but left because he could not behave as entrepreneurs do:

“The thing is, I cannot run after money, and I cannot calculate each penny on resources like entrepreneurs here do. I have a family, I have my literary circle, so I left and instead joined as an event manager for another business at its best.”

8.4.3 Resource Mobilization and the Legal Status of Firms

The descriptions and results of this study also add to a growing body of literature on informal entrepreneurship. This dissertation has particularly examined the question of how informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources. In answering this question, I determined how appropriate resource mobilization can develop and formalize informal ventures in the context of an emerging economy. This study has examined the conceptual overlap in the literature on informal and formal linkages. This study contributes to and calls for a more appreciative and detailed approach to understanding informal sector entrepreneurship. An important idea that emerges from the findings conceptually is that informal entrepreneurship will not disappear or vanish but acts as a primary livelihood strategy in emerging economies. Therefore, it is central that the importance and position of informal entrepreneurship be recognized and redefined as a participant in market development. Informal entrepreneurship serves as a second-best solution for entrepreneurs in Pakistan to become involved in economic activity in a short
Discussion and Conclusion

The findings also suggest that in the long run, informal entrepreneurs tend to formalize or intend to formalize their ventures. Overall, resource mobilization activities contributed to firms’ formalization status in a few cases. In the cases all ventures started as informal, but after a few years of operation some enterprises were formally registered with the Small Medium Development Authority (SMEDA). This is an important factor in highlighting that informal micro-enterprises may convert to formal status if they are successful after a few years of operations. Pakistan is a country in which the size of the informal market and numbers of informal micro ventures are constantly on the rise. This sheer size of informal entrepreneurs is at the forefront of development policy debate, and the challenge for the Government of Pakistan remains in terms of whether it wants to enable measures to formalize informal enterprises. The findings showed that 15 micro-enterprises that started informally had a different status after a few years of operation. Altogether, the 15 ventures ranged from informal, to semi-formal, and formal status on a continuum (Welter, Smallbone, & Pobol, 2015; Williams & Shahid, 2014). The different legal status of firms is discussed briefly to understand the operation of informal micro-enterprises. These findings are brought forward as they may help add useful information for policy measures to enable the formalization of informal micro-enterprises.

8.4.3.1 Established Firms with Legal Status and more Formal Linkages

The established state demonstrates increasingly formal linkages with stakeholders. It also consists of established relations with various government agencies. For example, public media and public-sector units such as ministries are quite often their clients. These relations are quite formal and provide considerable negotiation space for these informal entrepreneurs when it comes to terms and conditions, such as setting margins, scheduling events, etc. These informal entrepreneurial firms have been established in the business successfully for more than 6–7 years and have well-established clients. They have a team of more than 20 employees approximately and they are federal board of revenue registered. The expansion of such firms results in increased business activities in other cities of Pakistan; some had also launched new units with a different profile. Some were planning to launch their operations internationally and some had already done so. This expansion stimulated structured program activities and resulted in a significant evolution of informal businesses, from informal to semi-formal, and to formal. The reasons given by the interviewees for this shift and its importance were as follows:

“As soon as we realized that we were losing our sense of direction, we started to structure our business-related activities and get formally registered to organize better.”
Tipu from Miradore
“Many people come into this event planning field thinking it is a piece of cake and then vanish. It is not easy. If you want to sail, then think ahead and think through about formal businesses processes.” Bilal from Concept

“If we want to always stand out then the proper organization, structure, and relationships will let us.” Adnan from ADS Event Management

Thus, this widening of business activities brought a whole new level of formality to these informal firms. This included both informal and formal arrangements of working. They had a more structured approach to attaining objectives and even toward relationship building. The participants shared that this evolution of venture states from informal to formal is due to the fast-growing and changing industry conditions. For example, some of the participants explained this evolving context as follows:

“Today’s event planning industry is not like traditional hotel industry; it is changing every day, it has incredible dynamism.” Haroon Adeem from The Jungle

“I always keep on searching for what is coming. Next, I need to differentiate, otherwise we are dead.” Flower King

Resource mobilization has opened up opportunities for easy and affordable startups for informal micro-entrepreneurs. These informal ventures keep on growing because of collaborations among these informal entrepreneurs and their competitors.

8.4.3.2 Semi-Formal Firms

The semi-formal state consists of increased social relations with actors in the market, not simply preexisting relations. Accordingly, this is the group that consists of firms that are in a successful stage of operation, with established good reputations and relations besides their family and friends. Their networks (although largely informal) are constantly increasing. They manage their money and have more than 10 employees. In the sample, the firms in this phase were profitable with semi-formal operations. These firms were mostly informal, but their increasing credibility and reputation among clients forced them informally to be more accountable and transparent. Further analysis of this group showed that their semi-formal operations emerged from their organizational characteristics, meaning that these firms were revealed as overlapping informal social structures like those of other market actors and networks, together with formal registrations and NTNs. The documents signed between vendors were quite limited and did not inform on reporting mechanisms or other formal communication patterns. These flexible semi-formal operations were supported by trust as the main facilitator of the process. Trust promoted confidence and
benefited all the parties involved. However, some inconsistencies were also observed because of the flexible communication patterns in this phase; the importance of more structured activities was also highlighted by the interviewees. Shahid from Eventox noted that he used his NTN number only when he worked with government or the corporate sector. Revelations and Potter’s Wheel were registered firms, but still worked largely informally in event planning and execution. For example, Potter’s Wheel was registered with many panels, but preferred to work in the background to arrange events, and thus gain event skills and knowledge.

8.4.3.3 Informal Firms

The informal independent state consists of firms that prefer to avoid the registration procedure and continue informally. This purposeful avoidance of the registration process helps the entrepreneurs to venture informally, and to incubate their entrepreneurial ideas and survive outside the formal institutional environment. They predominantly depend upon themselves (personal resources) and their family or friends (bonding capital). Mostly, the independent informal structures are managed and motivated by the founders, since they do not have any formal institutional support and very low informal social support (especially for finances). This gives complete control over their limited economic activities and the desired flexibility to maneuver in the market. In particular, the firms in this group had the entrepreneurial logic that they wanted to specialize in a particular sector of the market and survive in a dense market with minimum resources and administrative hurdles. Informal meetings and visits usually initiate the dialog between vendors when they have no experience or knowledge of each other. All the negotiations relating to the event theme, décor, scheduling, deliveries, venues, prices, product, and quality are maintained informally with the vendors. If the experience is good, the resources are specified, and vendors are added to the panels and become very important for the firms as they contribute indirectly to the reputation, but this can also backfire with low quality and untimely deliveries. In the inception stage, the focus is on specifying resource needs and finding new opportunities. It does not involve much planning, but rather executing or at least starting the event by collaborating with competitors to fulfill resource needs. Thus, the process is simple, i.e., let’s do it and then figure out how it should be done, as explained by Tipu from Miradore. In this sample, Craft Manager, Studio Events, and Bia Interiors remained informal until the data collection process.

8.4.3.4 Exit

In the sample, one of the entrepreneurs exited the business. Umaira from Party Place switched career to the banking field. Upon analyzing her resource mobilization strategies, she relied on thrift and bonding capital. She lacked linking or bridging capital, and therefore her resource mobilization efforts were
not entirely successful. Event planning expert, Haroon Adeem shared his experience of business exit for similar reasons.

Part II

8.5 Theoretical Contributions

The primary focus of this research was on understanding how human and social capital influence the resource mobilization of informal entrepreneurs in the event planning industry in Pakistan. Resource mobilization is important for an entrepreneur in developing countries (e.g., Long, 1977; Sutter et al., 2013; Webb et al., 2013, 2014). This study conducted qualitative in-depth analysis to understand the influence of social and human capital on the resource mobilization of small informal entrepreneurs. Table 36 provides an overview of the theoretical contributions of this study.

The major contribution of this study lie in extending the resource mobilization theory of entrepreneurship developed from Western perspective to developing countries in the informal sector (event planning industry). This focused on resource mobilization and how these resources can affect opportunity exploitation; in some situations, resource mobilization even resulted in opportunity identification, e.g., new collaborations, new venues, etc. Resource mobilization was explained through a combination of human capital and social capital. This resource mobilization provides benefits to informal entrepreneurs through different collaborations and shared knowledge. Moreover, informal entrepreneurs with strong and weak ties bring new kinds of information and resources to the networks. This new information spreads smoothly among the entrepreneurs because of strong collaborative ties and shared knowledge inside the collaborations.

Table 36 shows the prior views in the literature in terms of resource mobilization, social capital, informal entrepreneurship, and human capital. Resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is observed to be collaborative in nature, helping to promote new entrants and low resource-based ventures in the network. The informal entrepreneurs in this study chose to remain informal until they had sufficient resources and clients to run their business smoothly in the long run. In this informal entrepreneurial activity, a few ventures managed to transition to formal status after they established their reputation and name in the local market. Therefore, it is important to change our perception of informal economic activity as always marginalized (Williams et al., 2010). In line with scholars like Dana et al, 2000, 2001 and 2008, it was also found in this thesis that informal sector works in relation with formal sector through
formal and informal linkages (Meagher, 2013). Both formal and informal sectors are mutually synergistic and deliver more value to society as a whole (Dana et al., 2000, 2001, 2008). In fact, it was also found that it can be a matter of choice to incubate business ideas informally until they attain success. In the prior literature, scholars (e.g., Meagher 2013; Williams et al., 2010) also reject the marginalized view because they have observed that some entrepreneurs choose to remain informal, not because of resource constraints, but to learn about the market. Based on these academic views and findings from this thesis I would also emphasize that an integrative perspective is important for analyzing informal economic activity, such that informal economic activity is part of economic activity with a different approach. An extra layer of social capital, i.e., linking social capital (Woolcock et al., 2000) was also observed in a few instances, in that the informal entrepreneurs developed powerful linkages to gain resource access or to deal with constrained situations. Linking social capital has been used in social studies for community mobilization (Woolcock, 1998; Woolcock et al., 2000). However, it has not previously been observed in the case of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. Informal venturing acts as a process in training informal entrepreneurs for business management and developing market knowledge. Informal venturing can be seen as venture-specific human capital.
Table 36 Overview of Contributions to the Entrepreneurship Literature in this Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Prior Literature</th>
<th>Extended Views</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Mobilization</strong></td>
<td><strong>Competitive resource mobilization</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collaborative resource mobilization</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competitive advantage based on immobile resources</td>
<td>• Competitive advantage through sharing and exchange of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and scarce resources</td>
<td>resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Supply chain collaborations for complementary</td>
<td>• Competitors and stakeholder’s collaborations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>resources</td>
<td>• Social and economic exchanges</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Trust building, verbal contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Informal Entrepreneurship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marginalization</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration as part of formal economy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Population excluded from the labor market</td>
<td>• Participation in the economic activities, formal and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Few opportunities</td>
<td>informal sector are mutually synergistic (Dana et</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Formal and Informal linkages (Meagher, 2013)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Choice based motivations to involve in informal</td>
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<td>activities (Williams et al, 2010)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Informal venturing to gain venture specific human</td>
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<td>capital.</td>
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<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td>• Bonding social capital for resource mobilization</td>
<td>• <strong>Linking social capital</strong> (Woolcock et al., 2000)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>among entrepreneurs</td>
<td>adds an extra layer of social capital for resource</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Bridging social capital for resource mobilization</td>
<td>mobilization among informal entrepreneurs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>among entrepreneurs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Human Capital</strong></td>
<td>• Generic human capital</td>
<td>• <strong>Informal venturing</strong> is a kind of human capital</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Entrepreneurship specific human capital</td>
<td>that allows informal entrepreneurs for business</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Venture-specific human capital</td>
<td>training and necessary knowledge gain and skills</td>
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<td>enhancement for doing business.</td>
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8.5.1 Resource Mobilization and Informal Entrepreneurship Revisited

The literature on informal entrepreneurship, especially in advanced economies, reflects informal entrepreneurs as a marginalized group, and public policy responds by seeking the eradication of informal entrepreneurship (Williams, 2006). Nevertheless, in developing countries, informal entrepreneurship represents a major proportion of the economy. This huge part of a hidden enterprise culture is now seen as an asset that can be transferred to the formal economy instead of eradicating it (Williams, 2010). Therefore, it is important that we think beyond the marginalization thesis in terms of informal entrepreneurs (European Commission, 2003; Small Business Council, 2004), and try to understand informal entrepreneurship as part of the economic landscape. This thesis is an acknowledgment of the calls for understanding informal entrepreneurs’ activities beyond marginalization. This thesis takes resource mobilization as the main theoretical concept to study informal entrepreneurs. The core aspects of resource mobilization in the prior literature comprise resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization. This concept primarily focuses on arranging resources for business activities. However, the existing literature highlights resource gathering as the main activity of resource mobilization. In contrast, I propose and show in this thesis that resource mobilization is an ongoing activity that comprises and represents an overlap between resource identification, resource gathering, and resource utilization.

The results of this thesis show that informal entrepreneurs mobilize resources collaboratively and not competitively. This means that informal entrepreneurs rely on collaborations among competitors and other stakeholders. The interplay of social capital (bonding and bridging social capital) and human capital (information, informal venturing) played an influential role in collaborative resource mobilization. I suggest that collaborative resource mobilization is important in studying informal entrepreneurs. Collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is an ongoing activity that can be explained with one activity, and it goes beyond both the marginalization and competition theses. One interesting effect of this collaborative resource mobilization is local market development. The results of this thesis show that informal entrepreneurs connect to the markets through their interactions with different stakeholders. Because of frequent collaborations and knowledge resources, informal entrepreneurship in this region of Pakistan (as demonstrated in the study) has resulted in employment generation, local resource deployment, and the facilitation of new entrants with very limited resources, enabling them still to be part of the competitive market. Therefore, informal entrepreneurship should be integrated within the economic landscape and not marginalized from the economic sphere. This finding also integrates the suggestions of Williams (2006) namely that informal entrepreneurship should move beyond the
marginalization thesis and Dana et al. (2000, 2001, 2008) that formal and informal sectors are mutually synergistic and create value for the whole society.

The contributions to the resource mobilization and informal entrepreneurship debate of this thesis are shown in Table 36. This illustrates that the prior resource mobilization literature depicts resource mobilization as competitive, while the findings herein show that resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs is mostly based on collaborations. The informal entrepreneurship literature shows that informal entrepreneurs are marginalized groups. However, this thesis shows that informal entrepreneurs opt for informal ventures to gain integration in the market through gaining market- and entrepreneurship-relevant experiences and resources. The findings also demonstrate that some of the informal entrepreneurs became formal after arranging and mobilizing the necessary resources over time. Collaborative resource mobilization is an ongoing process of identifying, gathering, and utilizing resources. During this process, informal entrepreneurs rely on their personal knowledge and information in resource identification, group attachments during collaborations, and localized knowledge in resource utilization. This means that resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs also integrates three levels: individual, group, and societal.

The lower left quadrant of Table 36 (informal entrepreneurship) shows that informal entrepreneurs are excluded from the economic sphere and informal ventures are only necessity based. In this situation, informal entrepreneurs are given few opportunities and they have minimal connections with markets in terms of attaining better business opportunities. This is similar to the marginalization strategy suggested by Dualism debate (Williams & Round, 2007), in which informal entrepreneurial activities are leftovers from economic activities. The lower right quadrant of Table 36 describes the motives of informal entrepreneurs to become engaged in informal economic activities, which are also choice based. Participation in informal economic activities helps to establish connections and networks to seek and arrange resources for informal entrepreneurs. Informal venturing provides the space to learn about the local market, community, culture, and the availability of different resources. Therefore, integration is an informal entrepreneurial strategy that explains how informal economic activities and business ideas are started and developed using limited resources.

For resource mobilization, existing and extended views are described in the upper quadrants. In the upper left quadrant, resource mobilization is seen as a resource arrangement and utilization strategy that is competitive in nature. Entrepreneurs arrange unique and scarce resources to establish competitive advantage with respect to their rival firms. The nature of collaboration is mostly supply-chain collaboration between small and large firms, and strategic alliance to outsource or to compete globally (e.g. Dana et al., 2000; 2001 & 2008). However, in this thesis collaborations among informal micro enterprises are formed locally to attend various resource constraints and at the same time these
informal micro enterprises compete in the same market. Resource mobilization is collaborative in nature, as shown in the upper right quadrant of Table 36. Collaborative resource mobilization shows that informal entrepreneurs establish competitor collaborations to compensate for scarce resources. Similar resources are exchanged and shared among competitors to help new entrants in the event industry. This type of collaboration is beneficial for both parties and allows informal entrepreneurs to compete in the market with minimum resources.

8.5.2 Social Capital and Entrepreneurship

The findings of this study demonstrate that informal entrepreneurs mobilize and gather resources using their social capital. In this study, a central feature in social capital accumulation is trust among contacts. In recent times business scenarios for an informal entrepreneur has been changing. For example, trust based networks have led to the growth of micro-entrepreneurs, i.e., event planners who work in collaborations based on trust and friendship (Starr & Macmillan, 1990). These collaborations are maintained through strong ties because of trust.

Social capital building and mobilization is a continuous process and continues to change depending on resource needs and business goals. The informal entrepreneurs in this study started with different strategies, such as using their personal resources and their closed networks (bonding social capital). In line with the prior literature (e.g., Bhagvatula et al., 2010; Davisson & Honig, 2003), the findings of the thesis showed that normally when it comes to finances, most of the startup capital comes from the immediate family, personal savings, or friends. In order to expand their ventures, informal entrepreneurs seek resources from informal sources, such as contracting, community involvement, and collaborations (bridging social capital). Later, an extra layer of social capital, i.e., linking social capital, was mobilized in a few cases (powerful local governmental or business contacts). Bonding, bridging, and linking social capital build upon one another. Thus, bonding social capital was prominent in securing entrepreneurs with low resources, but as soon as the ventures grew, entrepreneurs needed bridging social capital, as bonding social capital alone cannot sustain a firm in constrained situations. Together, the three forms of social capital provided the best possibilities of resource mobilization. However, trust among ties acts as a catalyst to speed up social capital mobilization activities.

The findings show that social capital plays an important role in mobilizing resources. Such resources mainly relate to physical, financial, and social resources. Event planners in Islamabad have developed an organized structure in sector E-11. Increasing numbers of event entrepreneurs are moving to this location because of the social capital benefits, e.g., an increased customer base, smooth resource transfer, skilled manpower, event information, etc. (The Nation, 2015). Sometimes information saturation was also observed, as entrepreneurs noted that people are providing same event designs and there is thus no creativity in event architecture and management. A similar suggestion was made by
Granovetter (1973) that too much sharing in the network results in information saturation and the chances of creativity are reduced.

In the event planning industry, entrepreneurs look for discontinuities in the market and then address them (Kirzner, 1997). It was found that bridging social capital based on networks at a distance, i.e., geographically dispersed networks, bring in opportunities for informal entrepreneurs. Some event planners, such as Potter’s Wheel and Bia Interiors, noted that they prefer wholesale suppliers that are not aware of each other, and so they buy their resources from Karachi instead of local areas. This gives them diverse information, and entrepreneurs can choose which information has the best potential to be translated into a marketable product. This is more in line with Burt’s (2000) argument that largely disconnected partners are more beneficial, because homogeneous networks can be a burden; however, a strong position in the heterogeneous network can bring advantages. Sutter et al. (2013) show that the geographic dispersion of the network can help entrepreneurs move their entire businesses to new locations, and thus escape the “threats” posed by local gangs, while enhancing the entrepreneur's awareness and understanding of opportunities in other markets. Recently, competition from the traditional hoteling and catering industry has become a major threat for informal entrepreneurs, as it enters the event planning industry with a huge resource base. Thus, informal entrepreneurs have started experiencing and sensing a big threat from bigger market players. Informal entrepreneurs need to bring in new and creative products, ideas, markets, and services on an ongoing basis. Along these lines, Hira from Revelations and Adnan from ADS considered that the best strategy in the current scenario for this bunch of event planners would be to explore new markets. This requires tapping weak ties and sparse networks, utilizing existing stocks of human capital in new markets for the identification of new opportunities.

The findings are largely consistent with the discussion in the existing social capital literature. However, social capital mobilization, largely through competitor collaborations and linking capital, is an activity that is unique to informal entrepreneurship and needs to be discussed in future research.

8.5.3 Human Capital and Entrepreneurship

Scholars (e.g., Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Hambrick, 2007) see the positive relation between knowledge, information, and education and successful economic and entrepreneurial activities. Along the same lines, this thesis shows that human capital, especially information and knowledge, plays an important role in successful resource searching among informal entrepreneurs. Making sense of information contributes to resource utilization and resource identification (Misra & Kumar, 2000), and is important in analyzing how entrepreneurs access resources (Baker et al., 2003), create new resources through customer/user involvement (e.g., Salunke et al., 2011), or shape social meanings in contextual settings (e.g.,
Discussion and Conclusion

Mair & Marti, 2009). Another interesting fact is that when event planners communicate effectively, they mobilize more resources. The ability to communicate better can be effective when engaging in informal daily wage labor negotiations among the interior and rural parts of the country, both to produce a variety of products and govern services. Pakistan is divided into different social classes, predominantly on the basis of pyramid and poverty lines. Therefore, those who speak regional languages are able to reach out to informal wage labor and local suppliers with greater ease. This means that human capital promotes and supports social capital mobilization. For female entrepreneurs, there is an additional responsibility in terms of following a proper dress code when they go to these rural or interior areas, such as covering the head, wearing traditional dress (the Shalwar Qameez). This ability to communicate effectively through adopting acceptable informal norms shapes the everyday behavior of informal entrepreneurs (Pretty & Ward, 2001, p. 211). Informal norms define what actions are considered acceptable or unacceptable, and include customs of co-operation, reciprocity, avoiding deception, adhering to verbal contracts, and deciding on acceptable sanctions (Lyon, 2000, p. 665).

Training new manpower in the event industry is a challenging process because learning is subjective. For instance, recent entrants have limited skills, which restrict the development of a diverse product portfolio for the event planner. Corresponding to the business training issue, informal venturing plays an important role in gaining necessary business skills and market knowledge. Informal venturing helps to gain experience in the event planning sector and event business. This informal training in business with the help of informal venturing can be regarded as venture-specific human capital, and aids in refining resource search and identification. Nevertheless, while experience allows intensive and constant searching, not all searching leads to appropriate resources. Thus, prior knowledge and experience gained through entrepreneurship and venture-specific human capital increases the likelihood of success but are not a guarantee of success. Experienced entrepreneurs may deal with uncertain situations better, which is why new entrants to the event planning industry prefer to affiliate with existing event planners (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003). New event planners who set up their firms after years of working for another firm are more inclined to have contracts with established event planners providing them with appropriate resources. Also, many firms specialize only in certain types of products and services, and competitor event planners contact them when they want to outsource production for that particular good, e.g., Potter’s Wheel, which specializes in graphic design. One strategy for newcomers is to collaborate with key players in event planning to explore the market, and to share human capital and development collaboratively in the industry. However, they may need to possess information and communication skills for effective resource mobilization.
Part III

8.6 Limitations and Research Implications for Future Research and Policymakers

8.6.1 Limitations

This study has several limitations. At a conceptual level, the study might have benefited from a stronger and refined definition of resource mobilization. The division of the resource mobilization process into different phases naturally entails simplification of what in reality is a more complex process. Developing a refined definition for resource mobilization could help understand the process in greater depth. Due to the time limitations and methods employed in this study, it drew on relevant concepts rather than aiming to generate and develop refined definitions for resource mobilization.

The scope of this study was limited to understanding resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs. As the study stands now, it makes theoretical contributions generated from a single empirical context in a developing country, i.e., Pakistan. The study is thus limited only to insights gained through a sampled group of informal entrepreneurs. Therefore, rather than providing generalizable findings, the study provides new perspectives on resource mobilization that might be expanded to other informal entrepreneurs and to their resource mobilization activities. In developing nations, this issue of resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs might be more pressing.

The choice to use a qualitative approach with a multiple case study design was useful; however, some methodological concerns can also be raised. I analyzed the empirical material mainly based on the interview data, which placed certain demands on the interviews in terms of contain enough material for the analysis. In abductive theory, interviews are modified when new analytical questions occur, and insightful probing is important. When I collected the data, I knew that I would be using resource mobilization as the main concept. Therefore, I added themes as part of the interview, influenced by the main themes based on the theoretical analysis, and kept the questions concerning the resource mobilization phenomenon more consistent.

As a researcher, I selected interviewees in the hope that they would talk about and share their views on aspects aimed at and asked for in the research; however, this is not as simple as it might appear. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), this is not always possible because sometimes participants’ main concerns are even not clear to themselves. Many of my participants had never talked about or reflected on entrepreneurial resource mobilization before the interviews; for some of them, entrepreneurial resource mobilization was more or less an
automatic behavior as a consequence of some trigger. The entrepreneurs, although familiar with notions such as striving, making it happen, we can do, etc., had to articulate these for the first time. The concept of entrepreneurial resource mobilization is rooted in beliefs related to solving problems creatively and uniquely. However, this creative problem solving is influenced and limited by many contextual factors and structures. Complementary interviews and research on these influences, e.g., family members, customers, and employees, would have generated more elaborate and in-depth perspectives on the relational aspects (social capital) of entrepreneurial resource mobilization.

The data contain variations in terms of gender, age, and events profile. I strived for variation because I wanted to collect various views, although other variations that influence resourceful behaviors are not well represented in my material. For example, a majority of the participants were of Punjabi ethnicity, and the individuals born in other regions had all lived in Punjab for several years. Using a variable sample was positive because the participants recounted various experiences and had an overview of various entrepreneurial activities. However, I did not perform a comparative analysis of age and gender because the material was relatively small, and therefore specific age groups and genders dominated certain findings.

I have reflected on my process of research, I have tried to be ethical and transparent when I have transcribed and translated data, since Urdu was mostly used in the interviews and data were later translated in the thesis. To make it valid and transparent, I sent the transcripts to participants. Also, I presented the quotes verbatim. Moving back and forth between the data helped in obtaining an accurate sense. All research is contextual, so the transferability of research findings applies to some conceptual findings, such as resource mobilization and informal entrepreneurship. It is possible that entrepreneurs with resource scarcity in other regions of the world or other contexts might face the same triggers and go through the same resource mobilization activities. However, some findings are only specific to Pakistani or developing South Asian nations, for example, entrepreneurial environment, particular stereotypes, etc.

8.6.2 Implications for Future Research

Despite its limitations, the study offers certain implications for further research possibilities involving other informal entrepreneurs. First, the study proposes a new way of viewing resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs, i.e., collaborative resource mobilization. Collaborative resource mobilization captures the actions of informal entrepreneurs in mobilizing resources that is an alternative to the typical presentation of competitive business rivalry. This collaborative view of resource mobilization supports the idea that collaborations with competitors may help in bringing out the best solutions for resource scarcity. However, collaborative resource mobilization does not mean the elimination of competition from the market; rather it promotes healthy
competition. This collaborative view of resource mobilization breaks down into different sub-phases of recognizing resource needs, and accessing and sharing resources through collaboration, as well as readiness to utilize local resources. Future research should build on this understanding and also explore whether this division of sub-phases of resource mobilization are meaningful for further study.

The findings of this thesis suggest that both social and human capital are necessary for informal entrepreneurs to mobilize resources. More specifically, the findings suggest that informal entrepreneurs who integrate both social and human capital not only mobilize resources successfully, but also engage in new economic activity. During this process of resource mobilization, some informal firms also eventually formalize. Combining these findings with current discussions in the informal entrepreneurship literature (Dana, 2013, 2014; Welter & Xheneti, 2013; Williams & Shahid, 2014) regarding the formalization of informal ventures could result in insightful study investigating the relationship between resource mobilization and legal status, or the formalization of informal ventures.

Future studies may address the nature and forms of resource mobilization struggles involving different forms of power, such as age, gender, and experience to inform on diverse resource mobilization experiences among informal entrepreneurs. In the thesis, it was observed that few informal entrepreneurs exit from their ventures because of an increase in resource constraints. I have not explicitly examined the failed informal entrepreneurs, which would be an interesting future research area. Future research should also connect resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs to organizational outcomes, e.g., performance and profitability. Little is known about the sub-phases of resource mobilization and profitability. Moreover, future research could look at different industries in developing regions to observe resource mobilization activities, drawing similarities or highlighting differences with the findings of this study.

Like this study, future research on resource mobilization would benefit from considering actions as a unit of analysis, namely the actions of informal entrepreneurs, running micro-entrepreneurs in this study, equal to the sources (i.e. triggers) and activities in totality. Sources are clearly demonstrated as important factors in understanding resource mobilization. A theoretical perspective conceptualizing actions (sources and activities) to understand resource mobilization is necessary.

Longitudinal data would explain how resources are mobilized and how informal entrepreneurs evolve over time (e.g. from personal to business collaborations; from weak to strong ties; from project-based ties to continued weak ties). Longitudinal and quantitative studies may help in refining and developing the resource mobilization construct.

I believe that to enhance research, several kinds of perspective are needed, including qualitative, quantitative, and comparative studies. Future research may add complementary interviews with other stakeholders for a more enhanced perspective on factors driving the entrepreneurial resource mobilization process.
8.6.3 Implications for Policymakers

In recent years, entrepreneurship has been regarded as crucial for regional economic growth and economic resilience (Reynolds et al., 1994). Entrepreneurship enhances regional productivity through resource allocation (Acs & Storey, 2004). It is assumed that the misallocation of resources leads to lower productivity and the reallocation of resources through entrepreneurship will facilitate an increase in productivity (Fritsch & Mueller, 2004).

Within the literature on regional economic resilience, resilience has two meanings: a) resistance b) adaptation against shocks (Baker & Powell, 2011). Resistance to shocks means bouncing back (Baker & Powell, 2011), while the adaptive view of resilience is based on a complex adaptive system view (McCarthy et al., 2006). Adaptation refers to the rearrangement of an internal structure (Baker & Powell, 2011; Martin & Sunley, 2007). The essence of adaptive resilience is to transform with changing circumstances (Welter & Xheneti, 2017).

The complex adaptive view has been linked to entrepreneurship and collaborative networks (Martin & Sunley, 2006). Complex adaptive systems comprise multiple groups of individuals or agents with multiple interactions and relationships. These relationships are ongoing and keep on evolving and changing depending on conditions and circumstances (Carpenter, Walker, & Anderies & Abel, 2001). Therefore, resource mobilization through social and human capital is not an end but an on-going event. The history of the development of social and human capital is unique and happens with collective entrepreneurial actions that shape the local environment and emerging industry (Feldman et al., 2011).

This dynamism attributes to human agency and the innate capacity of informal entrepreneurs the ability to imagine and respond to constraints, and be resilient through their learning (Magis, 2010). This human agency works at both the individual and collective levels, i.e., community, region, and country (Skerratt, 2013). Therefore, understanding the scope of policy action for resilience at the regional level demands an understanding of the complexity in the economy. This complexity is greatly influenced by human action organized at the collaborative level (Meagher, 2013).

Similarly, along these lines and findings from the study, it is suggested that understanding resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs through social and human capital mobilization in developing the region can play an important role in developing purposive policy action to improve the chance of ensuring a productive and economically resilient region (Cowell, 2013). The entrepreneurial agency of informal entrepreneurs can be translated into policy agendas that match complex adaptive systems and a particular culture (Skerratt, 2013). For example, policymakers in Pakistan can understand society’s culture and highlight the importance of learning, innovation, and improved communication (Dana 2013a, 2013b, 2014), which are considered critical for adaptation in complex systems (Magis, 2010). The mobilization of knowledge for
the business environment among informal entrepreneurs might also help entrepreneurs to develop and shape their businesses in emerging economies. This constitutes the core market and business knowledge, property rights awareness, financial infrastructure, tax reforms (Dana, 2013a) will enable entrepreneurs to mobilize appropriate resources to pursue opportunities. Once the policy structures for entrepreneurs are set, the business environment can be relatively stable, and guide entrepreneurial actions (Dana, 2013a; Heracleous & Barrett, 2001). If the markets, these informal entrepreneurs serve are uncertain and inconsistent, the stability of systems can make it easy for informal entrepreneurs to set up ventures (Harrison et al., 2004) and prefer formal ventures.

8.6.4 Final Remarks

This study found that resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs comprises a mix of social and human capital mobilization. The mix of social and human capital means having collaborative networks and shared collaborative knowledge, along with a strong trend for informal venturing. This combination of social and human capital activities of informal entrepreneurs improves the synergistic effects contributing to the readiness of informal entrepreneurs. Readiness is an evolving concept that emerges during the resource mobilization process of informal entrepreneurs and allows them a place in the market even with limited resources. This finding is in line with Bhagavatula et al., (2010), i.e., a mix of social and human capital seems best suited to the event industry in Pakistan. In addition, new insights arise from the findings, namely that resource mobilization is not competitive but rather collaborative. This collaborative resource mobilization is largely based on activities such as competitor’s collaborations and collaborative knowledge sharing through informal venturing. Trust and the reciprocal exchange of resources among competitors is most important in this collaborative resource mobilization process and works as a major strengthening factor in promoting collaborative resource mobilization among informal entrepreneurs.
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## Appendix 1 (Selected Articles for the Integrative Literature Review: Informal Entrepreneurship)

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